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The Autobiography

of

Alfred Austin

Poet Laureate

1835-1910



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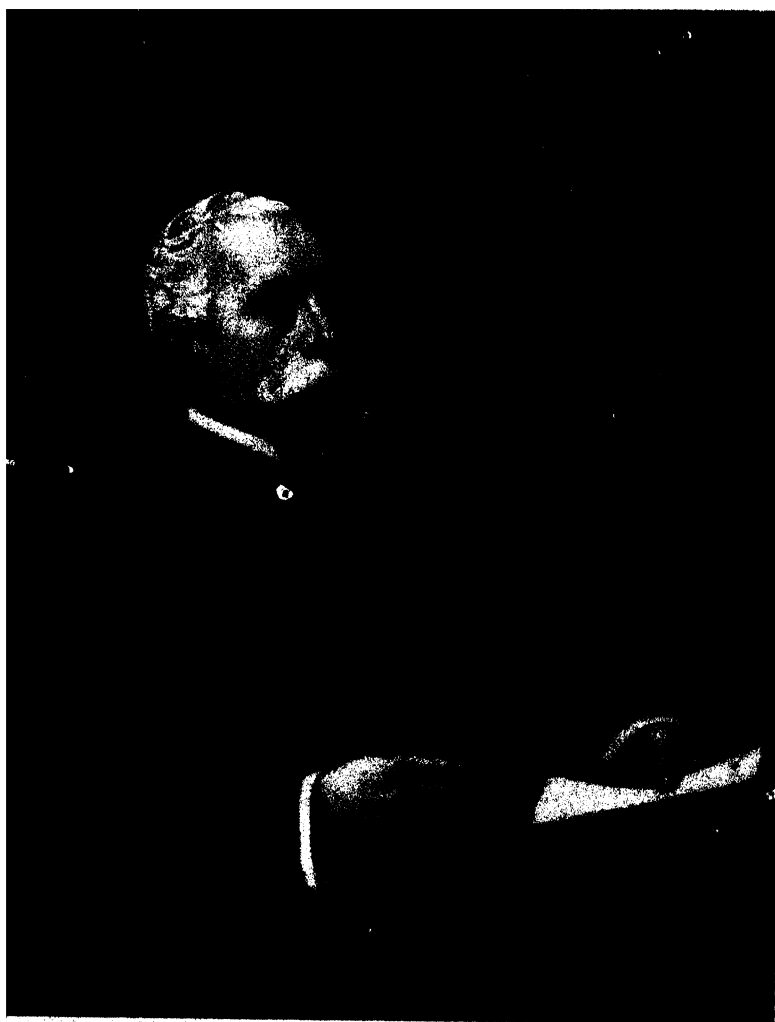
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Alfred Austin
1900

from a miniature painting by W. L. Scott Butler

The Autobiography

of

Alfred Austin

Poet Laureate

1835-1910

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I

MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED
ST. MARTIN'S STREET, LONDON

1911

THIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY

IS DEDICATED

TO

H. J. A.

THE MOST DEVOTED AND HELPFUL OF WIVES

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CHAPTER I

Birth—Parentage—Relations—Childhood—First School—Ikley.

AN autobiography that corresponds with its title must, in any case, be a difficult and dangerous undertaking. Having carefully read over this one, all of which has been written during the last twelve months, I observe the prevailing note is one of cheerfulness, due in great measure to the unmerited good fortune that has attended the writer since he had full liberty to make good or ill use of the opportunities presented by life.

Yet it has been truly said by Goethe, as expressed in the lines translated by Longfellow in his *Hyperion* :

Who ne'er his bread in sorrow ate,
Who ne'er, throughout the midnight hours,
Weeping, upon his bed has sate,
He knows ye not, ye Heavenly Powers.

In an autobiography, however, as in private discourse, one does well, I think, not to dwell too much on one's sorrows and misfortunes, lest one's hearers should say to themselves, "Why does he tell us of things whereof we have had enough of our own?"

The proverbial pitfall of autobiographies is egotism. But what is egotism? It cannot be the recital of what has happened to oneself; for we all do that every day. Is it not rather self-laudation, either direct, or indirectly by the depreciation of others? From both these kinds of egotism I shall study to abstain, and if I sometimes seem not to have quite succeeded, I can only ask, in advance, for the indulgence of the reader.

Literature, in verse and prose, Politics, internal and international, Journalism, War, Law, Religion, Art, Travel, Society, Town and Country Life,—of all these the author has had experience. Hence the materials for his task are not scanty; and, should his use of them prove lacking in interest, he may nevertheless be rendering some small service to others by way of admonition and warning, and possibly of example to those whose principal pursuit is the noble vocation of Letters.

I have never made a note, nor kept a diary, about either others or myself; but I do not think that need preclude an accurate narrative. “The truth, and nothing but the truth,” shall control mine; and if it be observed that I do not add, “the whole truth,” that is because there are experiences in life that belong to the sanctuary of the soul, which no one has a right to invade. French biographies know no such self-imposed restraint, but it has generally been observed by Englishmen, at least by Englishmen of proper chivalrous instincts.

Among the words that have recently been

imported into the language, not, in my opinion, to its advantage, is the word "stylist." The sentence, *Le style, c'est l'homme*, is imputed to various authors, but I believe it belongs to Buffon; and it certainly was Montaigne who, when Henri Quatre said, "I like your books," replied, "Then, sire, you will like me; for I am my books." The author of this work can truthfully say that his style, such as it is, is spontaneous and unstudied, and conforms with advice he has always given to those who have asked him, "How can one learn to write?" My reply was, "Be yourself. That affords the only chance of real success. Fail, unless it be for the moment, you inevitably must, if you study to copy others, or to produce an effect by your mere manner of writing."

It needed more than one opinion which I could thoroughly trust, to overcome my reluctance to consent to the publication of this Autobiography in my lifetime. But, as Jules Simon says in his *Memoirs*, "*J'écris pour me rappeler, non pour me glorifier*"; and as it will, I hope, be found to be free from malice and uncharitableness, and even idle gossip, the age of the writer will perhaps constitute for him a sufficient exoneration.

I was born on the 30th of May 1835 at Headingley, then an outlying rural parish in the neighbourhood of Leeds, itself more like a very quiet provincial town than what it has since become under the manufacturing expansion of the last sixty years. My home, built by my Father shortly

after his marriage, was thoroughly in the country ; no other house intervening between it and the farther side of Woodhouse Moor. One small cluster of lowly buildings could alone be seen on the Moor, which I have heard my Father say he remembered as having been the Kennels for the local Hunt. No tall chimney, no volumes of smoke, could be seen from our grounds, nothing to indicate the proximity of unpicturesque mills and furnaces. Adjoining meadows, the playground of my brothers, my sisters, and myself, widened our boundaries, that are now occupied by rows of suburban terraces and a church, or chapel, I am not certain which. But a regiment of Cavalry and a Battery of Artillery were then always stationed in Leeds ; and it was on Woodhouse Moor that they executed, three or four times a week, their somewhat elementary manœuvres. The glitter of the cavalry sabres or the sound of the first cannon-shot always aroused my interest ; and I watched from the lawn with childish excitement the charging of the horses and the firing of the guns. I little thought that one of the experiences of my life would be to witness in 1870-71 at close quarters for six consecutive months the greatest and most pregnant European War of the last ninety years. When, at six years of age, my importance was materially advanced by the ownership of a pony, I used to hasten to Woodhouse Moor as soon as ever I saw the diminutive military force, which then seemed to me so imposing, had arrived there ; and I

remember, on one occasion, that self-same childish dignity being put to shame by my losing my seat in the presence of what I regarded as the British Army, and by which I was promptly replaced in the saddle. It so happened that Prince George, afterwards Duke of Cambridge, was the officer in command of the garrison; and, with the kindness of his race, he made me ride by his side during the rest of the morning.

The researches of genealogists have always stirred in me a certain scepticism; and I have not asked them to furnish me with a long line of ancestors assumed to be distinguished because remote, though no one admires honourable descent and the easy gradations of English society, from class to class, more than I do. I can tell only what I personally know, or was incidentally told by my truth-loving parents.

The business of my Father, as of his father and grandfather before him, was that of a Wool-stapler, a term that has borne different meanings at different periods of our history. The honourable trade of Wool-stapling in the time of Edward III., and thence onward for many generations, was a branch of commerce of exceptional interest and importance. Once, when staying with Mr. and Mrs. Lowther at Campsea Ashe, in Suffolk, I was driven to more than one moated house of striking architectural beauty, no longer maintained in its pristine pomp, but now occupied as a farm-house, that belonged to wool-staplers

in the days of the Plantagenets. It is matter of history that wool-staplers played a prominent part in furnishing supplies for maintaining the military forces of the Realm; that the amount of their contribution for warlike and other purposes of State was a frequent source of conflict between the Crown and Parliament; and that for a time Edward III. succeeded in making wool a Royal monopoly. A brass I once saw in a country Church, whose name I cannot remember, dated A.D. 1401, commemorated "the flower of the wool-merchants of all England"; and Green, the historian, affirms that "the wool trade especially held a place of distinction in the common esteem. They who followed it lived like gentlemen, and rejoiced in a superior station." In moments of playful fancy I have diverted myself by remembering that Shakespeare's father is described by earlier biographers as a wool-stapler, according to the different meaning of the term in those days, and that the Guild to which the great Florentine Poet belonged was the Guild of the Woolcombers. Such mental ancestry may inoffensively be recalled, since none can hope to approach the supreme greatness of those poetic *Dioscuri*.

It may not be uninteresting to quote here the account given in *Chambers's Encyclopaedia* of the ancient staples :—

Staple, a term applied, in the commerce of the middle ages, in the first instance, to the towns in which the chief products of a country were sold, and afterwards to the

merchandise that was sold at the staple towns. The staple towns, at first chosen from convenience, came in the course of time to be invested with important privileges. The staple merchandise of England has been enumerated as wool, wool-fells (*i.e.* sheepskins), leather, lead, and tin, to which have sometimes been added butter, cheese, and cloth. Wool was, however, in point of fact, a far more important article of export than any of the rest, and was really the subject of those multitudinous regulations which fixed the staple in particular towns, both of England and of the continent. Goods intended for exportation had, in the first instance, to be exposed for sale at the staple town; the principal purpose of this regulation being, probably, to restrict commerce to those places where the officers who collected the king's customs could superintend it. Another object kept in view in the provisions made in the 13th and 14th centuries with respect to the staple, was the encouragement of the resort of foreign merchants; indeed, greater privileges seem to have been accorded to the foreign than to the English merchants who attended the staple.

A tribunal of great antiquity, called the Court of the Staple, had cognizance of all questions which should arise between merchants, native or foreign. It was composed of an officer, called the Mayor of the Staple, re-elected yearly by the native and foreign merchants who attended the staple; two constables, appointed for life, also chosen by the merchants; a German and an Italian merchant; and six mediators between buyers and sellers, of whom two were English, two German, and two Lombard. The law administered was the *lex mercatoria*, and there was a provision that causes in which one party was a foreigner, should be tried by a jury one half of whom were foreigners. The most important legislative enactments regarding the Staple and the Court of Staple were the Statute of Acton Burnel (11 Edward I.), by which merchants were enabled to sell the chattels of their debtor, and attach his person for debt; 13 Edw. I. c. 3; and 27 Edw. III. c. 2, called the Statute of Staple, one object of which was to remove the staple formerly held at Calais to certain towns in England, Wales, and

Ireland. With the growth of commerce the staples became more and more neglected, and at last fell altogether into disuse.

Wool-stapling, as followed by my Father, Grandfather, and Great-grandfather—the last two had passed away before I reached the age of memory—seemed to me at the time a singularly light occupation. We all had to be in the breakfast-room at nine o'clock; and Morning Prayers, read by my Father, always preceded the morning meal. When it was over, he lingered among the flowers, the poultry, and the pigeons, and not till about ten o'clock did he leave for Leeds, where, in Albion Street, his office and warehouses were. He invariably walked there and back, a distance of about two and a half miles each way; for, with the masculine habit of the time, he looked on driving in carriages, save for pleasure or very long distances, as suitable only to women. In those days, people dined at a much earlier hour than now; hence he was always home by five, frequently by four o'clock, and on Saturdays yet earlier. I mention these otherwise insignificant facts to show under what leisurely conditions business was then conducted. His remaining share in it consisted in periodical visits to London when the Wool-Sales took place, where he bought what his judgment told him the cloth manufacturers of the West Riding would be likely to require, warehousing what he bought, and selling to them the number of bales they needed. Such

was the trade of Wool-stapling in those days. I am told it no longer exists; since the mill-owners, their manufactures being now on so large a scale, purchase for themselves in London and elsewhere what they require. Sometimes my Father would pay a visit to Germany, in connection with his interests at home; and for years I kept a letter from him, from Breslau, with a coloured picture of a Prussian Hussar in the corner of the first page. I remember that his judgment, in all matters of life and conduct, was regarded as a superior one, and he was frequently asked for advice, which they who sought it believed to be deliberately and impartially formed. More than once pressed to be Mayor of the Borough, all the more remarkable in those days, since he was a Roman Catholic, he thought it wiser to decline the office, though he accepted the duties of Magistrate. As the sequel of this narrative will show, he died when I was only twenty-two years of age, and within a few weeks after I had been called to the Bar. But I well remember the even cheerfulness of his temper, and on his face that philosophic smile which testifies to a knowledge of human nature, and a kindly indulgence towards it. No University education was then accessible in England to Roman Catholics, and, save for ecclesiastical purposes, hardly a collegiate one. But, on the other hand, the Grammar Schools of England still offered sound mental training of no narrow character, and his

acquaintance with the best Literature was remarked by me from my earliest days. He was, in no filially conventional sense, the best of Fathers; solicitous for the education of his children, comprehensive as regards study, severe in respect of conduct, and reasonably strict as a mentor in morals. The most devoted and domestic of husbands, he was, I could not help observing, much liked and trusted by women of every condition; for his attitude towards them was essentially chivalrous, and he impressed on his sons its supreme importance. The phrases most frequent on his lips were "Fairplay" and "Honour bright." His piety was simple and sincere, but never intolerant. Perhaps this last quality was due in some measure to the circumstance that, though his Mother was a Hutton, an old Roman Catholic family, one of her brothers being Prior of Ampleforth Monastery and College, his Father was of the creed of the majority of Englishmen. The Huttons, doubtlessly, had stipulated that the offspring of the marriage should be educated in the Roman Catholic Faith. I seem to remember that there existed a floating tradition among us that the Huttons had at one time been among the landed gentry, and had lost that position by the forfeiture of their estates in the most unsparing period of theological persecution. Be that as it may, I had from childhood, whether from inherited instinct or merely from individual idiosyncrasy, a passionate clinging to the country, a keen admiration of territorial homes, with their

deer-parks and wide-stretching woodlands, and an unconquerable antipathy, of a most prejudiced character, to towns, mills, and manufactures.

Of my Father's brothers and sisters none attained their majority ; so that only on his mother's side, among the Huttons, had he near relatives. He stood alone, therefore, of my paternal forebears.

On my Mother's side, I have the clearest recollection of my Grandfather, Grandmother, and their descendants ; for it was not till I was, I think, fifteen years old that my Mother's Father, William Locke, died at the ripe age of eighty.

In his youngest son's handwriting my Grandfather is described as "Mineral Agent to the Duke of Norfolk, and afterwards to Lord Stourton"; and a similar statement is made in *The Dictionary of National Biography*. If I were to try to describe his character in two brief words, I should say he was that extraordinary thing, a Roman Catholic Puritan. Of scrupulous honour and severe integrity, he applied to others the standard of speech and conduct he imposed on himself. It can hardly be necessary to add that such austere righteousness was accompanied by commensurate narrowness of mind and judgment. When, after her marriage, my Mother occasionally went to concerts or dances, he observed, "I wonder where Mary expects to go when she dies." For him, life consisted in work, prayer, and the reading of serious books. The peculiarity of his literary estimates was shown in the assertion that the best

and noblest line in the whole range of English Poetry was in Pope's *Essay on Man*,

An honest man's the noblest work of God,

a truly English standard which measures aesthetic art by an ethical standard. His one pleasure in life was working in his garden; and as, when I remember him, he had retired from active life in consequence of advancing years, he passed thus much of his time in an old-fashioned home at Rothwell Haigh, about midway between Leeds and Wakefield, and then, whatever may be the case now, delightfully rural. On one occasion he asked me what were my chief studies at school; and as land-surveying was not among them, I could see that his conclusion was I was not being educated at all. His wife, Hester Teesdale, a native of the lovely river-valley that bears that name, was the mere but perfectly happy shadow of his will, and, as she was not a Roman Catholic by origin, she became one before he married her, as was perhaps to be expected. Though never possessed of more than very modest means, he was the chief founder of the Roman Catholic Chapel at Barnsley, where the statue of his youngest son now stands in the park of that grimy town.

Of my Mother I have a clearer and more definite impression than of any one; for she had a striking personality, combined with the most womanly tenderness, and she lived till a ripe old age. Her capacity for loving and sympathizing was in-

exhaustible, and her immediate use of them was unreserved. Yet her temper was quick with her children and her domestics, though never so with my Father, whom she loved, honoured, and obeyed. When a girl of eighteen she caught a severe chill, which left, as its sequel, a deafness that grew with the years. But she seemed to listen with her eyes, than which I have never seen any brighter or more observant, and though this substitute for another of the senses led to curious and sometimes grotesque mistakes, her surmises were not infrequently accurate. The beauty that springs from regularity of feature can never have been hers; but the attractiveness that depends on play and amiability of feature, which I have frequently heard attributed to her as one of the charms of youth, she retained to the end. Intellectually clever she was not, but she was supremely intelligent; and her love of music, together with quickness and retentiveness of it, as of old Songs and Ballads, was great. Nor was her artistic tendency confined to music. I remember her buying, for £15, a large outlay for her, a copy of Raphael's *Madonna Della Seggiola*, and my paying more attention to this than to morning prayers. She was wholly free from vanity, but evidently had a certain humorous pleasure in recording how, when Father Lefevre, a French Emigrant Priest (whose name I came across in an article in the January 1908 number of the *Dublin Review*, entitled "Catholic Records in the Diocese of Chester"), intro-

duced my Father to the Locke circle in order that he might fall in love with her younger sister, Ann, he fell in love with her instead. In that article the following passage occurs: "At Nidd, Yorks, the Catholic Squire kept a Chaplain, an *émigré* Priest, of the name of Le Faver (*sic*).” This evidently was the Father Lefevre I have just named, who, remaining in England after he might have returned to France, was a friend alike of my Father's and my Mother's people; and I have heard the latter talk of his love of Whist, which he used to play with them. My Mother's sister, Ann Sophia Locke, married a Hutton, a cousin of my Father, a model of good-nature and ineptness, whom she survived for many years, dying in the lay habit of the Confraternity of St. Francis of Assisi. They had no children, and lived in later years with my Grandfather and Grandmother at Rothwell Haigh, cheering and helpful to both.

It will be readily understood that, in the circumstances I have described, the Roman Catholic Creed and Ritual impregnated one's earlier years. But what has since come to be known as Ultramontaniam not yet being in active existence, there was no tinge of bigotry, much less of fanaticism, in the air I breathed or the language I heard. We had friends among Protestants, Quakers, and Jews; and I remember, at the dancing class my sister and I attended, my favourite partners were the daughter of an Anglican clergyman and an exceedingly pretty Jewess. When the *Weekly*

Register, edited by Lucas, a brother-in-law of John Bright, a convert to Roman Catholicism, and as intolerant in theology as Bright was in politics, published an article that seemed to my Father unpatriotic and un-English, the paper was no longer admitted into our house. Dr. Baines, the Bishop, titularly, of some Eastern See *in partibus*, was a frequent guest at Headingley, and I well remember his dignified aspect and attractive sanctity of manner.

In the dogmas I was taught, and in the ceremonies in which I shared, I gave all that young children can possibly give, tacit acquiescence. But I keenly enjoyed the music written for Masses composed by Mozart, Haydn, and Hummel, and with kindred delectation the vestments, the flowers, the incense, and the singing at "Benediction"; though, when bidden to act, in white surplice, as one of the acolytes in some Festival Procession, I profanely exclaimed that "I wished I had never been born!" For this "blasphemous" outburst I was threatened with condign punishment in this world, lest, did I fail to meet with it, I should be sure to receive it in the next. I fear my feeling was that I preferred the postponement contained in the second alternative. Even thus early I experienced a sense of isolation and estrangement from the tastes of others described in the earlier stanzas of *The Door of Humility*, partly autobiographical throughout.

Into every English house, Politics, then as now, actively entered; and my Father's, as of all Roman

Catholics at that time, were on the side of the Whigs, who had long been advocates of the Roman Catholic Emancipation Act, which was passed a year after his marriage, which had been compulsorily celebrated in a Protestant Church before being sanctioned in the Roman Catholic one of Saint Anne's. To me, when a child, differences of Party bias naturally signified nothing. But I took a keen interest in the hoisting of a large Orange Flag, the Whig Colour in the Borough, on our house at election time. Many years later, my Father, as was and is still the case with most Roman Catholics, transferred his sympathies to the Conservative Cause; and I recollect a Mr. Beecroft, who had been returned by a very small majority as Conservative member for Leeds, telling me in the lobby of the House of Commons he owed that majority entirely to the local influence of my Father.

Of my Mother's four brothers, only the youngest acquired special distinction; and as two of them lived in counties remote from Yorkshire, and locomotion in the days of my childhood was slow and comparatively difficult, we saw but little of either; and all I distinctly remember of them is that they had a marked taste for music and sang most agreeably, and seemed to have attractive social qualities.

My Mother's youngest brother, Joseph Locke, was the eminent Civil Engineer, and the leading pioneer, together with Robert, the son of George Stephenson, in making the plans and specifications

for the first Railways in England. He acted in a similar capacity, but alone, in France and Spain. He was one of the earliest Presidents of the Society of Civil Engineers, and his portrait by Sir Francis Grant, the President of the Royal Academy, is on the wall of the theatre of that Institution in Great George Street. There is likewise a Memorial Window to him in Westminster Abbey, and a statue in the Locke Park at Barnsley, in the Grammar School of which town he was educated. Later in life he began but did not proceed far in a Memoir of his life, which is in my possession. It opens by saying that he was born on the 9th of August 1805 at Attercliffe near Sheffield, his Father being Mineral Agent for the Duke of Norfolk and also for Lord Stourton. In the year 1822 he was sent to Newcastle-on-Tyne to study in the works of George Stephenson, who, himself with somewhat insufficient knowledge from the lack of education, was engaged in the manufacture of locomotives whose final development has changed the industry and habits of the world. Under the nominal headship of George Stephenson, he surveyed the Railway from Liverpool to Manchester, and from Liverpool to Birmingham; George Stephenson's son, Robert, having charge of the portion from Birmingham to London. The absence of Robert Stephenson in Mexico, in the years 1822-3, cast more responsibility on my Uncle, but helped him all the more, he says in his MS. Memoir, to acquire an early knowledge of the

practical parts of his profession of Civil Engineer. During the same period, he adds, he availed himself of all his leisure time to make up for the shortcomings of his linguistic training at the Barnsley Grammar School, attending lectures at the Philosophical Institution in Liverpool on every possible occasion. In 1824, when he was still only nineteen years of age, George Stephenson asked him to be one of his assistants, at a salary then deemed exceptionally handsome.

It is not necessary to record here, what is to be read in *The Dictionary of National Biography*, the various engineering works in which he was engaged till he made, very early in life, a conspicuous reputation, side by side with Robert Stephenson, with whom he formed a friendship that was never broken. This was all the more significant as to who was in the right, and who in the wrong, in the unfortunate difference between him and Robert Stephenson's Father, which ended by my Uncle severing his connection altogether with the latter. In the MS. Memoir he gives a detailed account of all the circumstances and progress of the difference. But it is enough to state here that it began by his discovering, when consulted by the Directors of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway, that, according to the specifications furnished by George Stephenson for the construction of the Edgehill tunnel, the portions worked from the two ends would not meet, but would cross each other. Errors of an analogous

kind occurred in George Stephenson's plans for the construction of the Liverpool and Birmingham Line; and, after privately informing his titular chief of this in vain, Locke was compelled, as a matter of professional honour, to inform the Directors of the fact.

In 1849 he entered the House of Commons as member for the Borough of Honiton, where he had purchased an estate, mainly for the sake of the parliamentary seat it secured him. He retained it uninterruptedly for the rest of his life. He called himself a Liberal, but the designation represented, in those days, something very different from what it represents in these; and one who sate for what was in effect a "rotten borough" was not likely to entertain very Radical opinions. Being independent alike of Electors and Ministries, he voted as he pleased; and I remember being with him in the Lobby at the time the Party he usually supported had introduced their Reform Bill, and his being asked casually by Lord Panmure, then Secretary of State for War, if he thought the Bill would pass a Second Reading, and his replying, "Not if it depends on my vote." Very shortly afterward, the office of Commissioner of the Board of Works became vacant through death, and in ordinary circumstances it would have been offered to him. I need scarcely say it was not. As he will be mentioned more than once in the course of my reminiscences, I need say no more here, unless it

be that he was named an Officer of the Legion of Honour by Louis Philippe, in consideration of his professional services to France as the Consulting Engineer of the earliest of the French Railway Lines.

Reminiscences of early childhood, especially if told by oneself, are apt to be rather naïf, and only raise a smile. If I say that I have a clear and loving recollection of my own special nurse, Mary Wilkinson, whose prattle was of the ordinary pattern of such; and for no other reason I can imagine, than that she had certain vague ideas concerning Alfred the Great, and my Christian name was the same as that of *England's Darling*, she was fond of iterating and reiterating the misappropriate words, "He shall be King of all England, he shall." I equally well remember our nursery governess, Ann Ingleson, who afterwards married the Manager of a prosperous cotton-mill. My earliest recollections are of a disposition to wander alone in meadows, gathering wild-flowers, and humming to myself songs I had heard others sing. At night I used to steal as quietly as I could out of my bed, and creep into the day nursery, from the window of which could be seen the rising of the moon, or the afterglow of sunset in summer. Anything of a more active character in which I took part arose from the suggestions of my elder brother and sister, the former of whom thought it the most natural because the most hazardous of sports, to wheel

me along the top of the kitchen-garden wall, or to inter my sister's doll with funeral honours, subject to its being dug up again; and the latter of whom displayed the girlish inclination towards mischief from the sheer enjoyment of doing what was forbidden. But my heart was in none of these. A little later I had a genuine pleasure in elementary cricket, flying my kite, and shooting arrows at a fixed target.

When about six, I was sent to a day-school in the village of Headingley, kept by two maiden ladies, the Misses Summers, staid and conscientious experts in teaching young children the rudiments of learning. My sister Winifred was my companion as far as their door, and then she went on to a Mrs. Gomoschinska, the English widow of a Pole, who educated one or two "young ladies" in what were then regarded as the necessary "accomplishments" for such. As an indication, possibly, of an inborn romantic tendency, I may recall an indefinable feeling which I cherished for a girl of my own age, who likewise was a pupil of the Misses Summers, and who, it would seem, in some degree shared the sentiment, since it was arranged between us that whichever of the two started schoolward first, placed a stone outside our garden gate as a token. I have always understood that what was there taught me was taught thoroughly. Our summer holiday was generally passed by my sister and myself at Ilkley, now well known to Hydropathists, but then as primitive

a little place as was to be found in the island, and about fourteen miles from Headingley, the road to it being up the lovely valley of the Wharfe through a small township of the name of Otley. Ilkley was known to the Romans, as was recorded in the following inscription on an old stone near the Church :—

IM · SEVERUS · AUG · ET ANTONINUS CAES · DESTINATUS RESTI-
'TUERUNT · CURANTE VIRIO LUPO · LEG · EORUM PR · PR!

I knew, as yet, little of Rome and the story which stated it to be the Olicana of old, or of the nymph *Verbeia*, who probably presided on the Wharfe. But I already loved the river, and used to lean for hours over its picturesque bridge at the end of the lane where the elder and the woodbine scented the air.

There was what was called the village street, but it was paved roughly, if at all; and a beck, as small streams are called in Yorkshire, and never dry, zigzagged through it. With the exception of the Inn, from which the Daily Coach started for Leeds or Bradford to much blowing of horns, I do not think there was a tiled or slated roof in the place. All the other houses were thatched; and our lodgings were in the chief of these, kept by a Mr. and Mrs. Senior, along whose kitchen ceiling were stretched wires, over which home-made oatcake was dried. Immediately opposite was the equally primitive home of Betty Butterfield, much frequented by us, since she kept donkeys for hire, and had charge

of the baths and wells up the hill on Ilkley Moor. It was altogether a place after my young heart; and though I do not think we ever took the baths, we used to walk up the hill every morning to where they were, to drink the cold pellucid water of an adjoining well that was supposed to have special health-giving virtues. I have a clear recollection of seeing an incorrigible drunkard in the Village Stocks, a revival of which I shall shock the sentimentalist by saying I should much like to see; and farmers and their wives who lived in the neighbourhood invariably riding into the village pillion fashion. Every Saturday, during the time we remained at Ilkley, our parents drove over from Headingley. On Sunday morning we all attended Mass in the private chapel in Middleton Park, belonging to the Middleton family, and in the afternoon we were driven to Bolton, six miles from Ilkley, whose ruined Abbey on the Wharfe, whose bounding and flashing waterfall, apparently endless woods, through which the Wharfe flowed and foamed, and well-known "Strid," filled me with romantic glee. They have all been celebrated, as I discovered later on, by Wordsworth in his poem "Hart-Leap Well." But that did not prevent me, as some perhaps will think it ought to have done, from describing Bolton, its Abbey, its river, and its woods, though without naming them, in some stanzas towards the end of the first Canto of *The Human Tragedy*, since it was among them that occurred what is narrated by Godfrid, after taking

farewell of Olive before her marriage. I am told that Ilkley is now a model Hydropathic resort, whose once rocky fern-clad slopes are covered with the huge conventional hotels of to-day, spacious Clubs and Concert-Rooms, and all the other concomitants of our much-vaunted material Progress and Civilization. And so one visits it no more, but repairs for rustic refreshment of the spirit to places mayhap such as Garmisch in the Bavarian Highlands, or to Château d'Œx.

To close the recollection of my childhood, I may say it was most deeply moved, and mainly attracted, by Nature, Music, Architectural beauty, things consecrated by time, and a dim sense of the magnetic difference between the sexes ; my chief faults being excessive sensitiveness, and a quick if placable temper. Perhaps it is only another instance of the child being father of the man.

CHAPTER II

. At St. Edward's—School Friendships—Education—*The Lady of the Lake*—Stonyhurst—Oscott—Takes Degree.

WHEN I was eight years of age, which was not long after my sister Winifred was taken to the Convent hard by Micklegate, where our Aunt Hutton had been educated several years previously, I too was thought to be old and advanced enough to be sent away from home. This was to "Saint Edward's, King and Confessor," at Everton, in the neighbourhood of Liverpool, whose President was the Rev. John Fisher, D.D., assisted by Doctor Gosse, afterwards Roman Catholic Bishop of that city, and a Canon Jackson. I cannot now speak with certainty as to the number of my fellow-students, but I think we were between thirty and forty. Among them were some South Americans, Brazilians, Peruvians, and Chilians, so that, early in life, I got accustomed to the fact that there are other countries in the world besides England. We were most comfortably housed and fed, Doctor Fisher personally superintending our needs, and amply providing for them. Nor can I praise too highly the thoroughness of the

tuition I there received. Over and above what was given by the resident reverend teachers, all three of whom had been educated at Ushaw, we had French masters, themselves Frenchmen, a writing-master, and a drawing-master, who came out so many times a week from Liverpool. Doctor Fisher had a strong dislike to what he considered rough games; but among those he forbade were not fives nor handball, cricket, and prisoner's-base, into all of which I entered with the greatest zest; habitually going into class in the afternoon with my hands so swollen by handball that I could not close them properly. We were forbidden to wrestle or to box, but that did not prevent the English section of us from doing both, as in our recreation hours we were generally left to ourselves, and certainly no habitual supervision was exercised over us.

When I had overcome my sense of home-sickness, for which, while it lasted, I was treated with the utmost consideration, I quickly developed an eagerness to learn all that was taught, and a spirit of emulation which perhaps I shall be forgiven for saying soon placed me at what is called the head of the school. Nor did I ever need the full time assigned us for preparing for our various classes; so I dedicated a portion of it to reading to myself French books mainly, among which I recall most vividly Fénelon's *Télémaque*, Chateaubriand's *Génie du Christianisme*, Bossuet's *Oraisons funèbres*, and Lamartine's *Voyage en Orient*. I found Arithmetic,

Algebra, and Euclid easy, but uninteresting and meaningless; my preference being for languages and English composition. We had not, in our *curriculum*, to write either Latin or English verse; but I began privately to write the latter, to the best of my remembrance, when I was ten or eleven; and I recollect, in one of our rambles, giving the paper on which a poem (!) had been scribbled, to a man I met casually who was shooting partridges, to use as wadding, his wads, I suppose, being exhausted. Not long ago, I came across some lines on faded paper, written on my thirteenth birthday, as elementary and valueless in every respect as might have been expected. My chief delight was to mount to the flat leaden roof of the school-house, follow the gradually waning sunset with intent gaze, and recite aloud to it and myself the sonorous hexameters of the *Iliad*. To my untravelled young eyes, the river Mersey, some three miles distant, figured as the Scamander, and the dunes and sand-stretches on its banks assumed the character of the Trojan plain. On one occasion Macready paid a visit to the school, and read to us Bulwer's *Richelieu*. On another we were taken in to Liverpool to see the *Great Eastern* on its completion; and, on yet another, to pay a visit to a Chinese Exhibition, which was then going the round of the larger English towns. Our walks extended to Bootle and Waterloo over rough ground, long since covered with docks; and occasionally we crossed the Mersey, and wandered over the then solitary shore

keen, and, for many years after, excessive, and I remember when reciting Cowper's poem "My Mother" in class, I burst into tears at the second

came your letter, my dear friend, to quite convert me, and if after so many proofs of attachment from all sides I persist in being cynical, I am quite unworthy of such good fortune. On the receipt of yours, I could not resist putting my thoughts into measure, and that is the last piece of folly that I have been guilty of."

He then goes to tell about the sights he has seen in London, including some of the noted dance halls, and adds: "I make a point of knowing everything. I see everything once, and if it be a degree below my minimum of propriety, why, I don't go again." This letter he closes with "Ever your most attached friend."

The next letter was written from the same address on April 25, 1855. The previous year Austin had published his first pretentious work, *Randolph, a Tale of Polish Grief*, and had evidently sent Mr. Tobin a copy. In opening this letter he rejoiced to hear from his old friend again, and "in this last of yours I find an additional cause of rejoicing: that *Randolph* has gratified you. Were you judging the work of some one indifferent to you, I should value your opinion much, but when I am the subject of your criticism I am sure Horace, Pope, and Boileau and all their rules are far from your mind and you see only the friend. I thank God it is so. I love that blindness of Friendship; the world is full enough of captious fellows telling you all your faults. I am not ungrateful to them and their kind correction. . . . Still let me tell you that you made me somewhat conceited by giving me Sam Slick's opinion. I thank him no less for that goodness than the many side-splitting bursts—or rather rolls of laughter that his works have given me." He then goes on to quote some English criticisms, including that of the *Athenæum*, which he valued highly.

HATED IDEA OF BEING 20

He also describes a reception to the Emperor Napoleon and Empress Eugénie which he attended, at which were present Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. He was greatly impressed with the lovely features of Eugénie.

Towards the end of this letter he says: "Both of us, Stephen (you and I), will be 20 in another month. Is not that awful? I hate the idea."

In a letter which is undated, he refers to the criticisms of *Randolph*, two "more or less lauding my attempt—one that I cannot get hold of abusing me. I wait patiently till the ——— has its say. All depends upon that. I am not so sanguine as I was, as I perceive now that the construction of *Randolph* is essentially faulty. The story is not sufficiently dwelt upon, and I have dreamed and rambled too much for the generality of readers. This arose from my writing too much as my humour led me; not thinking of and attending to the Poem as a readable whole. So if I fail I think I have deserved it." He adds that he is not given to despairing, and tells his correspondent of another poem on which he is working.—*Montreal Star*, October 22, 1910.

stanza and was mercifully told by Doctor Gosse to stand aside.

I could not praise too warmly the thoroughness, as far as it went, of the education I had at St. Edward's. I was well grounded in Latin and French, if less so in Greek; and, even in the latter, I had read, before I was fourteen, Xenophon's *Anabasis*, the Gospel according to Saint Luke, the *Symposium* of Plato, and the *Antigone* of Sophocles, and, not in class, but under the personal supervision of Doctor Gosse, some of the *Odes* of Anacreon. The teaching of one's own language was still more thorough; and, in it, I supplemented school-teaching by excursions and experiments of my own. All through life, far more knowledge and scholarship have been attributed to me than I at any time possessed, probably from my keen affection for what little I do know. To be able to learn easily, and to forget with difficulty, is a quality men bring into the world with them, if they have it, and confers on them no sort of merit whatever, such as may be ascribed to those who counterbalance native slowness of mind by resolute application. Moreover, facility of apprehension is attended by certain drawbacks from which I am sure I have not been exempted.

During the six years I was at St. Edward's, the duties and ceremonials imposed by Roman Catholicism occupied, as a matter of course, a prominent part. Among these were attendance at Mass every morning, Night prayers before retiring

to rest, and Vespers and Benediction on Sunday afternoons. On great Festivals, especially in Holy Week, known to Anglicans as Passion Week, we were taken to a Church in Liverpool, always spoken of as "Copperas Hill Church." My participation in all this was what I imagine is that of most young folk, passive but unquestioning, all the more readily, as these religious exercises were accompanied by no attack on other Creeds; the same sort of acquiescence one gives in boyhood to the statement that the earth goes round the sun, not the sun round the earth, and that the components of the air are, or were then, oxygen, hydrogen, and carbon. Looking back, I do not seem to remember that they sank deep into one, as did Lamartine's *Voyage en Orient*, or Addison's paper in the *Spectator*, *The Vision of Mirza*. Most boys are Pagans, and resemble those edifices in Rome, where the ruins of temples have been roofed in and adapted to Christian worship, without by any means losing their Pagan aspect and character. Such was my own spiritual condition.

It must have been during the first summer vacation spent by me at home, or when I was nine years old, that occurred what I have always looked back to as an enduring landmark in my life. This was the reading to me, by my Father, of the first Canto of *The Lady of the Lake*. Listening to it, I was wizarded away into a sphere of feeling I had not previously experienced with any definiteness;

and I kept repeating to myself, over and over again, the opening lines :

The stag at eve had drunk his fill
Where danced the moon on Monan's rill,
And deep his midnight lair had made
In lone Glenartney's hazel shade.

I seized the first opportunity of reading to myself the whole of the poem, and then did the same with *Marmion* and *Rokeby*. From these I passed on to Byron's Tales, learning by heart the most beautiful passages in *The Giaour*, *Parisina*, *The Siege of Corinth*, *The Bride of Abydos*, and *The Corsair*. This led to my reading every word of Moore's *Life of Byron*, and every notice of his poems in the *Quarterly* and *Edinburgh Reviews*. At the same time, I found, though unconsciously, a corrective to all this literary romanticism by reading *The Deserted Village*, *The Traveller*, and Gray's *Elegy*, all three of which I learned by heart, with sympathetic excursions into Pope's *Moral Essays* and *Prologue to the Satires*, and Crabbe's *Tales*. It was not till some years later that I became familiar with Chaucer, Spenser, Milton, and Shakespeare ; save that, like every other school-boy of the time, I knew by heart some of the most declamatory speeches in the dramas of the poet whom I came in due course to recognize as the greatest of all poets in our own or any other tongue. But he was food too strong, as yet, for one's still semi-childish mind. From that time onward, however, my chief interest was in Literature, and in Poetry

most of all, which ministered to my natural inclination for solitude. The real condition of my mind can scarcely be expressed in prose. But I think it is accurately described in the earlier stanzas of *The Door of Humility*.

When I was fourteen, I had learnt all that was taught at St. Edward's, and Stonyhurst was selected as the College to which I should be sent. Early in the eighteenth century, the House, built in Tudor times, with characteristic entrance and picturesque courtyard, was given to the Jesuits by the Welds of Lulworth, and with it a wide stretch of surrounding land of much variety and wildness. For some years, I believe, it was dedicated exclusively to the training of students for the priesthood ; but, by degrees, a lay element was introduced. As the former were, for the most part, of comparatively humble birth, there was a marked contrast, in some respects, between them and the latter. But even if we had been inclined to accentuate the difference by our conduct or deportment, it would not have been allowed ; and I am disposed to think it was good for us to learn, thus early in life, that social classes, as they are called, should be allowed to flow into and mingle with each other by insensible degrees and with perfect freedom ; a natural operation, ever more and more active in England, that has saved us from the revolutionary passions, rankling jealousies, and smouldering antipathies, from which other countries have suffered and are still suffering.

The traditions which the Order of the Jesuits had brought with them from abroad were followed by them, more or less, at Stonyhurst. If anything was practised that could justly be called *espionage*, it was not obvious; but open supervision over our behaviour was as close in our recreation as in studious hours. One ecclesiastical Prefect, if not more, always walked backward and forward in the playground, and others not infrequently shared in our football, our cricket, or our rounders, all of which were conducted with a reasonable amount of masculine roughness. The general living was distinctly Spartan; and we lay-pupils were as subject to it as the ecclesiastical students who had been accustomed to it in their own homes. I confess I felt, though I did not rebel against, the contrast it presented to the comfort and refinement prevailing at St. Edward's. One privilege, I remember, was granted me. The lavatory consisted of a row of taps of cold water, below which was a long shallow receptacle or trough; and the towels provided for general use were on rollers. I do not know how it was brought about, but I had my own towels, which nobody seemed to begrudge me. With longer experience of English modes of thought and the English character, the foreign system of constant supervision, together with certain physical hardships, has been relaxed, if not abandoned, by the Jesuits, as I learn from the very different treatment experienced by two of my nephews who were educated at Beaumont, near

Windsor ; and I am assured that a like change has taken place at Stonyhurst. I ought perhaps to add that boyish friendships, such as are natural and common elsewhere, were not permitted. This was the only form of restraint which I confess I resented, as trespassing on natural instincts, and which, as is invariably the case with such, was quietly evaded. For, to boyish attachments, as to later and deeper loves, the passage in Horace beginning "*Non turris aenea*," is equally applicable.

The Classes, or Forms, were in designation the same as the divisions of the mediaeval curriculum into the Quadrivium and the Trivium ; the former being named, in succession, Rudiments, Elements, Grammar, and Logic ; the latter being known as Poetry, Rhetoric, and Philosophy. After a preliminary private examination, I was adjudged fit for the Form of Poetry, though somewhat younger in years than the rest of its members. The education given justified the reputation long earned by the Jesuits for methodical and earnest teaching, and was in its main respects what is called classical. At the same time, we were given to understand that we were being prepared for Matriculation at the London University, which at that time was a University chartered only to examine and confer degrees on the students of the various non-Anglican Colleges affiliated to it. One could not matriculate till one was sixteen, and it was at that age, two years after going to Stonyhurst, that I did so.

But I must not anticipate that date ; though the two intervening years were, in the ordinary sense of the word, uneventful. I continued, as at St. Edward's, to enjoy preparing for class the various subjects assigned to it from day to day, but found the time allowed for such much in excess of what I needed. The result was the writing of verse, or what I then thought poetry, whose only kinship with the latter was that it sprang from spontaneous impulse ; and, not long ago, I came across the carefully written manuscript of a long "poem" whose simplicity made me smile. My memory, if I may say so, was quick in learning either verse or prose by heart, and I easily committed to memory thirty lines of Virgil in the space of twenty minutes. I am afraid the problems and theorems of Euclid were learnt with equal rapidity and in much the same manner ; my acquiescence in the demonstration being of a somewhat disdainful character, as I failed to perceive of what earthly use to me could be the conclusions they established.

I cannot say that I felt any attachment to Stonyhurst, probably because of the absence of the refinement fostered in my own home and at Saint Edward's. The food was abominable, and was served in the roughest and most unattractive manner ; and I cannot but attribute my somewhat weak digestion in after years to the semi-starvation arising from my inability to eat of it, save much too sparingly. The college butcher was the attendant at luncheon and dinner ; and it was he who stood

behind the trestle-tables on Tuesdays and Thursdays where were ranged the never-varying plum or apple pastries we could purchase at threepence each. Investing in two of these on each day, I always reserved one of them for the morrow. But it never occurred to me for one moment to make any complaint to my parents as to the food provided.

Religious ceremonies had a larger share in our training even than at St. Edward's, and to these I had no repugnance, though they aroused in me, I confess, no feeling of the beauty of holiness. Nevertheless I could not plead guilty to the accusation that my temperament was not, and has not continued to be, in a wide sense, a religious one, and I think the sequel will amply serve to exonerate me from any such reproach. But it was yet too early for its active influence; and the obtrusion, in our training, of dogma, ceremonial, and discipline, not improbably delayed its development. It was only on Sundays, Great Festivals, and what are called Days of Obligation, that Mass and religious exercises were celebrated for us in the College Chapel outside the building dedicated to study. But we had to attend daily in what was called the Sodality, just large enough for the students, about one hundred and thirty in number, and where a harmonium took the place of the organ. My chief recollection associated with it is the smell of the kine as they wandered freely up to its windows, the notes and

trills of the song-birds, and the occasion when Père Ravignan, the leader of the French Bar before becoming a priest and a member of the Order of Jesus, once paid us a visit and addressed us from the altar of the Sodality. The simplicity of his manner, the purity of his diction, the clearness of his enunciation, and the holiness of his countenance, made a deep impression on my mind at the time which has never faded, and increased my inclination towards oratorical expression. Of what he said I have no recollection, so absorbed was I in his manner, save that his first words were "Soyez bons, mes enfans!" and that his discourse closed with a repetition of those simple words. I felt I could have listened to him all day long. The impression produced by the sermons more frequently preached to us in the Sodality by Father Freudenfelt, a German, of whom the tradition was that he had fought at Waterloo, was of a different kind, and excited in us all the boyish sense of humour; all that I recollect of them being the sample we used to repeat to each other, being "'Ow can you 'ope, my tear children, to get to 'eaven? *Wolendo*, by villing it." Conceivably it gained something in oddity by the youthful love of travesty and exaggeration.

Into the games conducted with the roughness of those times I entered with zest, as with the skating which in the severe climate of the North always occurred during some portion of the winter, on the two sheets of water that flanked the approach to

the College—an approach which would not have seemed out of place among the picturesque colleges of Oxford. Excursions into the deer park, which occurred more rarely, gave me pleasure, since they offered a combination of wildness and solitude.

A Debating Society and occasional theatrical performances were among our diversions ; and the former interested me above them all. I began by writing and learning by heart what I had to say on the academical themes, for the most part historical, that were set us. Then, by degrees, while pursuing the same method in what I magniloquently regarded as the exordium and the peroration, I trusted to preparatory thought for the language employed in the body of my argument. In our performance of well-known plays I had my share, but I took these less seriously ; and I can only recall that I had a part, I do not recollect which, in the dramatized edition of *The Castle of Otranto*, *The Castle Spectre*, and Otway's *Venice Preserved*.

After matriculating, I was supposed to be preparing for taking my Bachelor's Degree at the London University. Walking home with my Father one Sunday evening, I was asked by him what I should like to be, and I promptly replied, "A Barrister." The reply was, "Very well." Hence the preparatory studies for my Degree, which could not be obtained before eighteen years of age. A year after matriculating, and when I was seventeen, I passed into "Philosophy," the students of which were, drolly enough, colloqui-

ally spoken of as Philosophers, though I think no word in the language is more curiously misapplied, especially by men of Science, than the word Philosophy. At Stonyhurst it signified, with some traditional excuse, the study of Logic and Metaphysics, in which I took much greater pleasure than in Euclid, Algebra, Logarithms, and Conic Sections. About the latter indeed I felt much as Gibbon did. "Here," he says—I am quoting from memory—"I bade farewell to the study of Mathematics, which blunt the mind to all the finer evidences." The class of Logic and Metaphysics was held at a short distance from the College itself, in a building called the Seminary, appropriated to ecclesiastical students of more advanced age, and was conducted in Latin, and on strictly Scholastic lines. On one occasion I propounded a difficulty—I have not the faintest recollection what it was—which, it would seem, met with no conclusive rejoinder; for on our walk back to the College, Father Fitzsimon, who directed the class, alluded to it to me, saying, "Remember, my child, when difficulties present themselves to your mind to which you can find no satisfactory reply, you must humbly wait for the day when '*In lumine Ipsius videbimus lumen.*'" Looking back to that incident, I have always thought the words aptly represented the real inner spirit of Roman Catholicism, and have sometimes, many years later, been disposed to think that they were the germ or first seed of *The Door of Humility*, not written till I was

approaching threescore-years-and-ten, though long dwelt on previously.

The material improvement in comfort on becoming a "Philosopher" was great, and was of course accompanied by a corresponding rise in expense. Each Philosopher had a private room, mine being in the old portion of the building overlooking the picturesque courtyard. We lived apart from the rest of the students. There was likewise an extension of liberty in our extra-mural walks; and though I was supposed to be preparing to take my Degree of Bachelor of Arts at the London University, I as yet concerned myself but little with an examination some two years distant, and I had ample leisure for such reading as was attainable in a library selected and supervised by ecclesiastical authority. A daily paper likewise was taken for our benefit. I continued to write verses for my own delectation which I fondly fancied to be poetry; and, while the range of my experience and the development of my character were retarded, I suppose I grew in what may be called learning.

But what gave me most pleasure was our fishing for salmon-trout, known in Lancashire as "morts," in the Hodder, which more than one artist has written of as one of the most beautiful rivers in England; and likewise following a pack of Otter hounds kept by a resident in the neighbourhood. Once we landed a real salmon, and cooked and ate it on the bank.

When the Summer Vacation arrived, I little anticipated I should see Stonyhurst no more. But, when the Vacation was approaching its term, my Father received a letter from the Rector saying that he had come to the conclusion that my character was calculated to create insubordination, and that he would rather, therefore, I did not return. No further explanation was given or asked for, and I was myself quite unable to give it. But the perspicacity of my superiors must have enabled them to observe what was unknown to myself, my inclination to independence of judgment. I learned some little time later that the cause of the delay in notifying that wish to my Father by the Rector was a sharp difference of opinion among the college authorities, the Prefect of Studies particularly being anxious that I should remain. But, looking back to the incident from the vantage point of later development, I can only recognize the almost prophetic insight into the future of my mind for which the Society of Jesus has long been celebrated. For my part I have no word of reproach or complaint to direct against them; and my three years' experience at Stonyhurst left me without any of the hostile prejudice that prevails against them not only in Protestant countries and society, but among not a few Roman Catholic Governments and individuals, whether laymen or secular ecclesiastics.

My dear Mother, who prized humility as one of the chief of virtues, and rightly regarded me as

deficient in it, was sorely distressed by the occurrence. But no severe word was addressed to me by my Father, probably because independence of judgment was esteemed by him as an integral part of the proper equipment of an Englishman.

The question now arose where I was to go, in order to continue my studies for my Degree. The decision was in favour of Oscott, the well-known Roman Catholic College, with which were associated the names of Newman and Wiseman, about six miles from Birmingham. The decision was very agreeable to me. All I urged was that the authorities there should be made acquainted with the reasons for my not returning to Stonyhurst. This was done with perfect frankness; and the answer, equally frank, was that it would be a pleasure to receive me.

Though, as I have said, I have nothing to urge against Stonyhurst, as it was in my young days, except that there prevailed a certain intangible air of restraint and excessive supervision, I found, to my delight, that at Oscott there was much greater freedom. The good-fellowship between masters and boys was peculiarly welcome to me; and the students, at least in the higher classes, governed their own movements in the hours not assigned for study. I scarcely think the teaching was as thorough as at Stonyhurst; but my own studies were so special that I cannot speak with confidence on this point. I remember being asked by the master of a Latin Class I sometimes attended,

to translate orally, and at once, a passage from Cicero. This was easy enough ; but, when I had finished, the master, an Oxford "convert," said, "I wish you all could do the same," and, turning to me, added, "It is plain you have been exceedingly well taught."

In whatever games were played, whether football or racquets, we were all free to share, and I availed myself eagerly of the opportunity. For cricket, I, confess, I felt less keenness, by reason of the amount of waiting about that attends it ; and this, no doubt, from a certain impatient activity of temperament which has diminished only with the waning of physical power that I began to feel at sixty-five. This disposition was gratified likewise in games of Bandy, as we called them, played pretty frequently in the Sutton Woods. What may have happened to Sutton Woods since then, I do not know. But, in those days, they were very beautiful and very extensive ; and in them were several large sheets of water, on one of which, "Dead Man's Pool," there was, during the one winter I passed at Oscott, first-rate skating. Another of our diversions was to sally forth, after dark, four abreast, with nets, poles, and a lantern, and beat the various stacks in the neighbourhood for sparrows, that were cooked for us, the next morning, for breakfast.

But, of all my pleasures, the greatest was having tea at "Miller's Pool," with the daughters of the miller, whose name was Vale, in company with

three other students, one of whom was Frank Plunket, who, after a long diplomatic career, rose to the rank of Ambassador, and died only in 1907. All four were supposed to be in love with Caroline Vale, the youngest and prettiest of the daughters; but I was taxed by my companions with being the "hardest hit" of the four. We used to linger so long under the miller's kindly roof, that we frequently arrived panting, for Night prayers in Chapel, so long had we protracted our innocent love-making.

I cannot recall receiving much personal tuition or assistance in mastering the several subjects in which one would have to undergo examination in order to obtain one's Degree; nor did I give myself much concern about them till about ten weeks before I went up to London for the purpose. But I then worked hard, for about ten hours a day, since the subjects were many, including Græck, Latin, French, English composition, the first six Books of Euclid, Algebra, Statics, Dynamics, and the Elements of Physiology. At the age of eighteen such a test is not difficult, and I passed in the First Class. When I took my farewell of Oscott, before going up to Town, I was thanked by the President for what he called the good example I had set the other students, which I could not help contrasting with the somewhat different circumstances under which I had left Stonyhurst.

It will be remembered that, in answer to my

Father's enquiry what career I should like to pursue, I replied vaguely, "The Bar." I had a sort of notion that the Bar was akin to Literature, but well knew that if I had said, "I should like to be a writer," and still more, "I should like to be a Poet," which would have been the truest answer of all, I should have been told, quite accurately, that Literature is not a profession. Hence my reply, "I should like to go to the Bar," without having any but the vaguest conception of what "going to the Bar" and the career of the Law really signified.

After taking my Degree, I remained at home for a bit, and passed my time, when not riding or taking exercise in some other form, in discursive reading, chiefly of Poetry and History; and what I then read, I think I still remember—a fortunate circumstance, since later in life I have been anything but a diligent or even frequent reader. I read at that time none but works of sterling value, and, my memory being then a retentive one, I have not suffered as much as I might otherwise have done from an ever-growing preference for an outdoor life, and what are called thinking and meditating.

CHAPTER III

Entered at Inner Temple—Reading for the Bar—Visit to Paris—
Called to the Bar—Death of Uncle Locke—*The Season: a Satire*—Hailey Lodge.

IN Hilary Term, 1854, I was entered at the Inner Temple, making, before the Benchers, the special Declaration submitted in those days to Roman Catholic applicants, and was called to the Bar in 1857, in the winter of which year I had the misfortune to lose my Father. Shortly afterwards Headingley was sold, and my Mother and unmarried sister Mary moved into a charming little house at Adel, called Beck Farm, where they remained until my sister married. My Mother then removed to London, where she spent the rest of her life.

I do not think it would have been possible for a young fellow of eighteen to be more unsophisticated than I was then, in all that pertains to life in general, and to a knowledge of the world and its ways, which would not have been the case had it been open to me to take my Degree at Oxford or Cambridge. How it may be now, I cannot say; but in those days the result of a Roman Catholic education was to keep the



JOSEPH AUSTIN.
1857.

young lamentably ignorant of what cannot be more accurately described than in the words I have just employed, life in general, and knowledge of the world. Nor does such education, in my opinion, altogether achieve the object for which it is intended, the preservation of what is commonly called "innocence." Nature takes her own precautions against ignorance of that kind ; and I am disposed to think that the Roman Catholic compulsory practice of auricular confession conspires with Nature to preclude the possibility of it. There are two lines in Coventry Patmore's "The Angel in the House," respecting a young girl :

So wise in all she ought to know,
So ignorant of all beside.

But it is a dangerous, and as a rule a useless, precept to lay down for the sex that has to confront the problems of life and solve them to the best advantage. With these I began to be confronted on residing in London, where, for two years, I was accepted as a boarder in a thoroughly refined and cultured Roman Catholic family of the name of Davey, in Keppel Street, Russell Square, recommended to my Father by the Roman Catholic Bishop of Southwark. I soon found myself thoroughly at home with them, and was treated by them with the greatest kindness. To the Bishop also was due the arrangement that I should read with Mr. Henry Bagshawe, the son of Mr. Bagshawe, Q.C., and himself in large chamber practice,

mainly on the conveyancing side of the profession. He had two other pupils, one of whom, William Coxon, I found had been at Prior Park with my elder brother and in the same class, and the other the son of a solicitor in Canterbury. My relations with both were easy and pleasant, and with the first I soon formed a friendship that lasted throughout his life, and has been perpetuated with his daughter, Mrs. Earl, who married one of the masters at Tunbridge School, and has shown her affectionate nature in dedicating to me, many years ago, her first book, in giving the name of Austin to her son, and in the frequent visits she has paid to Swinford. Her Father, like myself, abandoned the Bar, not for Literature, but for the Army, when in the Crimean War the 18th Lancers were revived and added to the list of Cavalry Regiments. He married the elder daughter of Thomas Cooper, R.A., the animal painter, who lived to so venerable an old age, and at whose town house in Dorset Square, and his country one at Vernon Holme near Canterbury, I was a frequent guest, his younger daughter being also one of my closest friends. Unhappily she died while young, as did William Coxon himself.

It may perhaps be thought, from what I have just said, that I had many acquaintances, from the very first, in my first experience of London. But the exact opposite is the fact. I have named them all, with the exception of the family into which my sister Winifred had recently

married, and whose husband had two very beautiful sisters, Cecilia and Barbara. Cecilia had just married Mr. Whiteside, who had a post in the Horse Guards, on the civil side; and she extended to me, till her widowhood, which did not occur for some years, a warm and most welcome hospitality. Barbara became one of my chief companions; and with her I escaped from Old Square, Lincoln's Inn, where Mr. Bagshawe's Chambers were, as often as I could and my very limited purse would allow, into the country suburbs of London, much nearer to the Town then than now. On Sundays I not infrequently spent half the day at Wimbledon, rural and unspoilt in those days, with some old friends of my own people, and who extended to me the greatest kindness. But it was the sights and sounds of Nature that gave me then, as since, the chief of my pleasures. To hear, as I walked up from the station to their house, the lark singing its way aloft, to wander and sit among the gorse on the Common, to listen to my accomplished hostess playing the Sonatas of Beethoven, these constituted my real life, and not "Sugden on Powers," somebody else on "Remainders," or the "Settlements" and "Conveyances" submitted to my inspection. Attendance at Lectures in Hall, and eating one's Dinners there, for three years, sufficed in those days, if one had a University Degree, to qualify one for admission to the Bar; and of these facilities I availed myself. Maine was the Lecturer, the most erudite of the class; and,

while he discoursed, I read some classical work or other in a living or dead tongue.

I do not know whether the Westminster Debating Society still exists. But it was in those far-off days a flourishing institution, most of its members being students for the Bar. Joining it with eagerness, I soon became one of its most frequent speakers; and, one evening, when I went there rather late, I found I had been elected Chairman of the Society, a post that did not debar one from sharing in its debates. Several of its members rose to legal and parliamentary distinction; and I at least acquired a facility, sometimes an extemporaneous facility, of utterance, that has been useful to me, I think, all through life, especially since one learned to tone down the natural exuberance of youth. In dining, the other day, as a guest of the Benchers of the Inner Temple, I was reminded by more than one of them of the days when we had met, Greek against Greek, at the Westminster Debating Society.

In the ordinary course of things, I should have been called to the Bar when I was twenty-one. But about a year previously I had a serious attack of illness, resulting in much loss of strength and weight, along with palpitation of the heart, though unaccompanied by any organic disease in it. A year, therefore, had to be dedicated to rest and medical treatment; and a portion of the first of those was passed alone in lodgings at Ilkley, that still retained

its primitive simple aspect. Its hillsides quietly resounded with the music of winding becks ; and in the companionship of these most of my days were spent. Boyish fancy, and inexperience of anything vaster, gave to their banks the character of gorges and ravines ; and it never occurred to me, as I afterwards learned it had to others, that my young life was threatened with extinction. One other companion I had, a notorious poacher, whose confidence I gained, and the narration of whose various exploits and incarcerations excited in me an irrepressible sympathy.

In May 1856 I was told, to my delight, that I was to go to Paris to stay with a cousin, William Locke, the resident consulting engineer, under my Uncle, of the Paris and Cherbourg railway, then in process of execution. I accompanied him on a journey of supervision of the progress of the line, and was thus afforded a sight of Rouen, Le Mans, and the port itself. His apartment in Paris was at the corner of the Rue d'Aguesseau, just opposite the British Embassy. Among his friends were Sir Joseph Olliffe, its official medical man, and Lady Olliffe. Their young children were singularly attractive, and their own kindness to me was great. Sir Joseph suggested that there should be a consultation concerning my condition with Doctors Velpeau and Trousseau, then at the head of their profession, the upshot of which was that they strongly recommended an operation. Sir Joseph Olliffe said he could not

sanction this without explicit permission from my home. Doctor Hay, on being consulted by my parents, absolutely forbade it. The observation of the French Doctors, not communicated to me by my cousin till some time afterwards, was that the only chance of saving my life was being refused. When, a year later, they were told by him I was getting better in England, they begged him to ask me, when I next came to Paris, to call on them. Before that happened, they both were dead.

Slowly, but without interruption, I became convalescent, and should have done so more rapidly, no doubt, but for the heedless indiscretions frequently incidental to youth. The Davey family had left Keppel Street for Italy; and I then boarded at a house in Bedford Place, a few doors from Russell Square. On being called to the Bar in Hilary Term 1857, I joined the Northern Circuit, and took Chambers in Figtree Court until, when it was pulled down, I moved to Tanfield Court, next door to the Library. On the same staircase, a floor above me, was John Pope Hennessy, the most lively of Irish companions. It is no wrong to him to say that he was endowed with the spirit of the adventurer, as the following incident will show. He was a clerk in the Education Department at a salary of £120 a year, his sole source of income. When the General Election of 1859 was announced, he came to me with a closed letter in his hand, and said, "I am going to Ireland to stand as an Irish Nationalist

Conservative"—then an entirely new creature—"for King's County ; and, on receiving a telegram from me, will you go at once and hand this letter to the Head of the Education Department ? It contains my Resignation, without which I cannot stand for Parliament." My observation was, "My dear fellow, you will die in a ditch," a prediction by no means fulfilled. In due course the telegram arrived, and I went with the letter to Mr. Lingen, whose look of amazement, when he read it, could not well be repressed. Hennessy was returned at the head of the poll in the County where the Father of my future wife was a resident landlord ; and within a week of his success I was accosted one night by a messenger who asked if I could tell him Mr. Hennessy's number in Tanfield Court. I replied that it was on the same staircase as my own Chambers, and that I would see that he received the letter the messenger carried in his hand. It was an invitation from Mr. Disraeli, the Leader of the Conservative Party in the House of Commons, to be one of his official guests at Dinner on the eve of the opening of Parliament.

I heard, shortly after, not to my surprise, that, not being in a position to pay for his election expenses, he had the good fortune to have them defrayed for him by the O'Donoghue and other Irish members. When part of Tanfield Court was pulled down, I moved again, as he also did, but his personal mode of life, like my own, was modest and frugal. Having, however, soon made his

mark in the House of Commons by the suavity of his manner, the plausibility of his facts and arguments, and perfect command over his temper in parliamentary as in private life, which no rudeness in others could disturb, he obtained, I know not from what source, means to enable him to go to Poland, then to Rome, thereby furnishing himself with further facts and experiences for his political career. I think he ended, unintentionally, by making himself what is called a bore in the House, and was offered, and accepted, a post in Africa under the Colonial Office, where he fostered unrest by espousing too warmly, it was thought, the cause of the natives. Moved from place to place, he invariably pursued the same course, and meantime saved enough money to marry a lady while in the Indian Archipelago, return to England, and purchase Sir Walter Raleigh's Irish home, Myrtle Grove, near Youghal. I suppose he is now pretty high forgotten. But he was an exceedingly interesting man, and a most pleasant companion.

The following letters from Pope Hennessy and part of one from Lord Rowton, giving Lord Beaconsfield's opinion of him, show that my own estimate of his talents was not exaggerated :—

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, HONG-KONG,
24th August 1881.

MY DEAR AUSTIN—You will see by the enclosed that your noble tribute to our chief has circulated along the shores of China. You are to be envied, for amidst the immense mass of prose and verse written about him, your lines are the best.

Those, if I may say so, like myself, who knew him well, and might be expected to feel as perhaps he himself would, must acknowledge that the verses of the 12th of May at his grave contain, in the touches of a master hand, an epitome unrivalled for truth and beauty of his character and career.

Do you remember, in our old Temple days, how we admired and studied him before either of us met him? I was the first to have that privilege, but you saw more of him in the final years of his triumph.

I hope you picked up something at Christie & Manson. The executors ought to have given you the silver inkstand. I recollect his showing me a silver inkstand at Grosvenor Gate that had been presented to him. It was a strange thing to sell those relics, but trustees have not much sentiment.

Now that he is gone, who is to be our chief?

I hope to goodness you have not irrevocably pledged yourself to an Anti-Irish policy, like so many of the Tories. Alas, his name, I see, is now invoked as an authority for a Tory policy which for nine-tenths of his long public life he denounced.

As an Irishman my National-Tory views were partly learnt from him, and especially from his speeches of 1844. Talking to him once about his speech of February 1844, in which he speaks of what the Irish Executive should be, he said he would like to see Bishop Keane of Cloyne, if he were in Dublin instead of the Whig, Dr. Cullen, upon the Irish Privy Council, and that he hoped if ever he was again in power to change the Irish Executive in that direction to make it represent the leading classes and characters of the country.

Look at that Executive now. Lord Cowper and Foster, with a Privy Council beginning with the Protestant Primate and the Protestant Archbishop of Dublin, and forty or fifty others that could not between them return six members of Parliament; indeed, not counting the University, that could not between them influence effectually a single seat.

Can such an Executive be what Disraeli declared in 1844 was essential for the true government of Ireland?

It was the fate of Pitt, who was the early friend of the

Irish Catholics and of Irish trade, to be set up after his death as an Anti-Catholic and Anti-Irish hero, no doubt mainly owing to the line he took about the Union. But though his Union was fraudulently obtained, and has never been really of any benefit to either kingdom, it is, to the misfortune of Pitt's memory, associated more with him than all his previous services to Ireland. Earnestly do I hope Disraeli's memory may not be treated similarly.

You are still young, with a growing reputation and that rarest of qualities, true genius. How I wish I could get you to use your pen and voice for that true Conservative policy which would make Ireland at once loyal and prosperous, that is the policy of giving her a constitution like that of Canada and Australia.—Always, my dear Austin, yours affectionately,

J. POPE HENNESSY.

RAVENSWORTH, BOURNEMOUTH,
Nov. 21, 1881.

MY DEAR MR. AUSTIN—I sincerely grieve that my delay in replying to your recent kind note should bear the semblance of neglect of one whom I so hold in esteem. But I see that it must be so.

The fact is that during the past four weeks I have been engaged in roughly looking over and putting together for removal, etc., the wonderful collection of papers which, till last week, were at Hughenden. My time has thus been *fully* occupied, and I have been able to give my mind to no other thing.

I have read the letter which I return with particular interest. Pope Hennessy is an old friend of mine, who has talked to me often, and well, on these things. He was aware of Lord Beaconsfield's—or rather Mr. Disraeli's—appreciation of him [for I doubt if, in the latter days, they ever met]; and I feel small doubt that if all Catholics and Irishmen had been as Pope Hennessy, Ireland and things would be now different. But they were not so; and, to quote my old chief's words, he was “stabbed in the back” in 1868. Ireland has never recovered the rejection of Mayo's

scheme by her prelates. *They* are to blame for Ireland still being the battlefield of demagogues.—Believe me, very sincerely yours,

ROWTON.

LE RÉDUIT, MAURITIUS,

1st August 1885.

MY DEAR AUSTIN—As a Carltonite and Disraelite and a staunch friend of yours for nearly thirty years, let me join in the earnest request that is being made to you by the best men in the party to abandon your idea of not going into Parliament now.

Everything turns on the event of next November.—
Always yours,

J. POPE HENNESSY.

In the autumn of 1858 I was staying at Scarborough with my Mother and sister Mary, after grouse-shooting with my Uncle Locke, as usual, in Dumfriesshire. I had left him in perfect health. But one morning we received a letter from my cousin William Locke, who had succeeded me at Moffat, saying that he was dangerously ill; and in the afternoon arrived a telegram announcing his death. The cause was something internal, which need not have proved fatal had Lister's antiseptic treatment then been discovered. On the following day appeared a long notice of him and his career in *The Times*.

He left what was then considered a large fortune, some £400,000. To his sisters and their children he had made various bequests, none of them large, but amounting in all to a considerable sum. The rest of his personalty he left at the disposal of his widow, whom every one had expected to predecease him, as she was a partially paralysed invalid, with whom lived a young adopted daughter,

who, with another young girl, a niece of my Aunt, before long inherited the bulk of his fortune.

His death saddened me, for he had been always very good to me, and, most of all, believed that I should have a future beyond the average one. But that future was greatly influenced by it; for I now saw my way to bidding adieu to the Law, and casting my bread on the precarious waters of Literature, and, most daring of all, Poetry. On one occasion he had said to me that he had been asked by Messrs. Swifts & Wagstaffe, then a leading Firm of Parliamentary Solicitors, and his own personal ones, to offer me a partnership in their business. The financial prospect thus offered was great, but I refused, without a moment's hesitation; and he at once observed, "I think you are quite right," again showing the generous belief he always entertained in my Future. Nothing is more presumptuous than for a man to suppose that he is a special favourite of Providence or Fate. Withal, the stars in their course happened to favour my daring, which was, at least, free from sordid or venal views.

Some little time previously, dissatisfied alike with myself and a legal career of any kind, I presented myself at the India Office as a candidate for its Civil Service in the East, not communicating what I had done to any one. I found such application had then to be made before the age of twenty-one, but was told the regulation would be waived in my case; I suppose, because candidates were much needed. But there was a preliminary

examination and the preparation for it to be faced. Setting to work to satisfy this condition, I one bright morning at Brighton let my eyes wander from a column of Algebra out to sea. Thereupon I rose in scorn, flung the book from me, and wrote these impromptu lines :

The sun is shining on the roofs,
The boats are tossing in the bay ;
And I am labouring at the proofs
Of X contained in n times A ;

and the India Office heard of me no more.

Though, on receiving the modest legacy I have named, I bade adieu to the Bar, I did not at once leave my Chambers in the Temple. *The Season : a Satire*, that had been composed either on the Dumfriesshire Moors with my gun over my shoulder, or in the London streets when returning from dining westward, often at the Junior Carlton Club, of which I was one of the first members, and which was then in temporary rooms in Regent Street, I brought to a conclusion, and passed through the press. I paid a first visit to Cambridge, in company with a man who, though already in middle life, was studying for the Bar, but whose love of Literature was very marked. I paid visits to various friends, and now and again wrote down lyrics that came into my head, and were afterwards published in the little volume called *Interludes*. Beyond these trifling matters I can recall little or nothing of what I did, or what happened to me for nearly a twelvemonth.

But experience has shown me that periods of lying fallow are not the least productive ones of a literary life. The brain, like the soil, can be worked too continuously, and without letting the fertilizing agents of sun and air silently assist the growth of future harvests.

When I gave up my Chambers for good and all in the Temple, and bade an only too eager farewell to London, I had no plan beyond that of wandering about England till late Autumn, and then going to Italy for the winter. But the unexpected was awaiting me. My companion was the one I have named as studying for the Bar rather later in life than is usual. Our halt for the first night was at the then picturesque Rye House, Hoddesdon, celebrated for its "Bean-Feasts," held, I believe, by London printers, but silent after dusk, and more than welcome to me by its splendid display of hollyhocks, then in full flower. But at the end of the third day we found ourselves, after a long excursion afoot into Hertfordshire, thoroughly tired out, and, though not far from Saint Margaret's Station, on a branch line of the Great Eastern, too late to catch any train there. In our weary perplexity, we met a man on horseback, whose face we could not scan, for it was between ten and eleven at night, from whom we inquired if there was any farm-house not far off where perhaps we could be taken in for the night. After thinking a moment, he said, "You might possibly do so, if you go up that lane; turn sharp to the left when

you get to the top of it, and you will then see a farm-house on your right. But I should think everybody there has long since gone to bed, tired out by a long day of haymaking." We thanked him, and followed his timely instruction. It was a scented summer night; and deep silence was in and round the place he had indicated. But, in our desperate fatigue, we knocked loudly and shouted, till a man put his head out of one of the upper windows. Would they, I asked, accommodate for the night two gentlemen—not tramps except for their own pleasure—and who would pay handsomely for the convenience? "Wait a little," he said, and shortly unlocked the door below, and made his appearance along with his wife, who said they would do the best they could for us. What they did was good enough for any one; providing us, after a little delay, two small but comfortable rooms, and, as at least we thought, excellent beds. Midsummer though it was, I did not wake till nine o'clock the next morning, and, on looking out of the uncurtained window, beheld a charming though neglected little garden, where the thrushes were singing their matins. I hurried through my dressing, descended the winding stairs, and found myself not only in a charming garden, but gazing on an equally attractive English white-washed cottage, covered with climbing roses and other flowering creepers. Walking round to where we had entered the night before, I found a front facing the lane not a whit less captivating. We

breakfasted in the garden, on excellent tea, home-made bread, and a farm-house rasher of bacon ; and I have had few happier moments in my life. Freedom had come to me, and, as kindly Fate had arranged for me, in a home of peace that responded to an ideal I had as yet but vaguely harboured. Further committing myself, with the recklessness of youth, to the same so-far kindly guide, and looking much longer ahead than youth is warranted in doing, I exclaimed :

“Sit mea sedes utinam senecti,”

and before noon had determined to take a lease of the place myself. Its tenants told me it belonged to an old Waterloo officer who lived at Southsea, and was let to them for £120 a year, the land attached to it consisting of several acres. The office of his solicitors was at Ware ; and there I went in the course of the afternoon. There would be no obstacle, they said, to accepting me as a tenant, if I could arrange matters with the present occupants. In this I found no difficulty, when I offered to build them a cottage on the farm ; they retaining the farm, and paying me the rent of it. It was all of a piece with my abandonment of the Bar, rash and impulsive to the last degree. Of that I took no heed ; indeed the thought never occurred to me. All I felt was that I was now free to follow my own bent, live my own life, and expand, if it might be, into a Poet.

CHAPTER IV

Love of Nature—Love of Poetry—*Randolph*—On the Moors—Letter of Matthew Arnold—Letter about *The Season*—Letter of Dr. Newman—Departure for Rome—*Free*.

LOOKING back, as far as memory will take me, I perceive that the poetic temperament was born with me. How and whence this came, who can say? There are some lines that do not aspire to explain, but only to state, the fact in the first two stanzas of Section IV. of *The Door of Humility*:

But, more than mentor, mother, sire,
Can lend to shape the future man
With help of learning or of lyre,
Of ancient rule, or modern plan,

Is that which with our breath we bring
Into the world, we know not whence,
That needs nor care nor fostering,
Because an instinct and a sense.

The Poem quoted here is so mentally autobiographical, that I trust I shall not be reproached for having occasional recourse to it in this more prosaic narrative. As is there briefly indicated, my earliest recollection of a keen love of sights and sounds in Nature was blent with a vague feeling that these had something to say to, something to teach me.

But what they said, or what they meant,
I could surmise not, nor translate.

I am speaking of a time when I was certainly not more than five years of age, when I used to creep silently out of bed in the night-nursery into the day one, in order to see the rising of the moon, or to beg my nurse Mary Wilkinson to let me sit up till the sun had set. Nor did this disposition dwindle as the years moved on. I was not at all reluctant to share in the games of childhood. But I never felt lonely when left to myself, wandering about quite content with humming melodies to myself and gathering flowers, both wild and cultivated, the former by preference. My choice in reading was of the same somewhat sentimental character, inclining to books in which there was a strain of sorrow, and contributing to them ready tears. When I strolled with my parents along the stream, then clear and silvery, now black as Erebus, that wound its way to Meanwood and Wheatwood, I never plagued them with questions, as children usually do, but dropped behind, absorbed by what I saw, and my own vague feelings. This simple condition continued, and no doubt went on developing, without any self-consciousness on my part. But soon there mingled with it a more definite feeling. Only a few years ago, not long before her death, my sister Winifred told me that she had met a lady whose name in childhood was Janie Teesdale, and who said she wondered if I remembered that I used to place a mark outside

the garden gate to show her I had gone on to school, and that she did the same if she passed first. "Tell her," I said, "I have a distinct recollection of it, and of our fondness for each other." Such was the dawn of the most educating of all our tutors, the as yet imperfectly opened blossom of that sentiment, whose fruit, in the poetic temperament, is poetry. All this is so long ago now, that I can write of it objectively as if it were the record of the early life of another, not myself.

This disposition did not render me disinclined to acquire what is taught at that early age. As soon as I could read and write, I attended a day school kept by two maiden ladies in the little village of Headingley, adjoining the Church and the Skyrack Oak, about three-quarters of a mile from my home. I see them both plainly now, one tall and slim, the other the reverse, but both thoroughly impressed with the importance of their calling. I think they found me no unalert pupil, since at eight years of age I was deemed sufficiently prepared for a public school, Roman Catholic of course, at Everton, near Liverpool.

A certain amount of home-sickness once overcome, I gave the same keen attention to my studies, and, to be frank, showed the same facility in mastering them, combined with eager pleasure in games and sports. I have described, in an earlier portion of the narrative, the nature of both; so that, in what is being written of now, I may confine myself to any further intimations of the poetic tempera-

ment. It is not unlikely that one's frequent visits to Ilkley, then the most rustic of spots, and surrounded by singularly picturesque scenery, had left its seed in congenial soil ; but I have no recollection of its producing in me, in those early years, any special sentiment, though later on, when staying there alone, I became keenly conscious of the kinship of its beauty, its uninvaded primitiveness, and the silence of its hills broken every now and then by the music of becks, with my own disposition, and my never-altered ideal of the wisest and most-to-be-desired life.

The companionship of forty fellow-students, and the introduction to the classics, had introduced me to a larger existence. The change was precisely what was needed to stimulate literary appreciation, by opening to one the approach to ancient and modern literature, both in verse and in prose. I seized on these with an ardent joy out of all proportion with the scant familiarity I as yet had of them. But spontaneous love of a little is more educating than a careless acquaintance with much ; and whatever was presented to me in Latin, French, or English literature I drank in with eagerness and lastingly retained. The oratorical quality in Livy, the military incisiveness of Caesar, the painstaking preciseness of Xenophon, the fascinating sentimentality of Fénelon, Lamartine, and Chateaubriand, the stateliness of Bossuet, the masterly minuteness and warm human sympathy of Goldsmith, Gray, Cowper, and Crabbe, all crowded in on my young

mind ; guests as various as those of country-houses of to-day, who were all accorded a hospitable reception, and all brought with them a contribution of knowledge and entertainment. May I add that most of them had that tone of good breeding that alone renders society, whether of men or books, delightful.

I have told in a previous page how great was the effect produced in me by my Father reading to me the first canto of *The Lady of the Lake*. From that moment I regarded poetry as the greatest thing in life, and to be a poet the most of all things to be desired. I think so still.

Each of Scott's poems in turn was got hold of and read and re-read by me ; and from them I passed on to Byron's earlier poems, *The Corsair*, *The Bride of Abydos*, *Parisina*, *Lara*, and *The Siege of Corinth*. Pope, Gray, Goldsmith, and Crabbe were also within my reach. I turned to them with almost equal interest, and they acted as a corrective, or complement at least, to Scott and Byron ; thus early confirming in me what I then suspected, and have long been assured of, that the best poetry is romantic in feeling and classical in expression.

A potent stimulus to this conception of the dignity and character of poetry was imparted by my first acquaintance with the *Iliad* ; nor was this confined to school hours or the time assigned to study at St. Edward's. During the ensuing holidays, my sister Winifred had to listen while I stood

on the seat of the summer-house at Headingley, and declaimed to her Pope's version of the oratorical or sanguinary sequel to the fugitive frailty of Helen.

It was hardly likely that such enthusiasm for the poetry of others would not give birth to verse-making in oneself; a result described in Section V. of *The Door of Humility* :

But slowly dawned a happier time
When I began to apprehend,
And catch, as in some poet's rhyme,
The intimations of a friend ;

When Nature spake no unknown tongue,
But language kindred to my thought,
Till everything She said, I sung,
In notes unforced, in words unsought.

And I to Her so closely drew,
The seasons round, in mind and mood,
I felt at length as if we knew
Self-same affection, self-same feud :

That both alike scorned worldly aim,
Profit, applause, parade, and pride,
Whereby the love of generous fame
And worthy deeds grows petrified :

She but responded to my call,
And only felt and fed my need,
Because She doth the same for all
Who to her pity turn and plead.

By the time I was fourteen I had written a long narrative poem, and been simple enough during the summer holidays to call on a book-seller in the then quiet street of Briggate to ask him if he would publish it. Naturally, he was quite willing to do so, but at my expense,

a thing quite beyond the powers of my pocket-money, which, meagre as it was, had already been pledged to buy *Canon Schmidt's Tales* as a birthday present for my sister Winifred.

This naïveté, at which the reader will smile, but, I trust, indulgently, persisted, in consequence of the too protective character of Roman Catholic education, till it ended in a shock of enlightenment from the real world. Before I took my Degree and was entered at the Inner Temple, I had read all the poetry on which I could lay my hand; supplementing the excisions carefully made by one's scholastic superiors, by unrestricted reading at home during the holidays. At Stonyhurst, even the quotations in the reviews of Byron's Poems in the *Quarterly* and the *Edinburgh* were mercilessly expurgated; and, in defiance of Byron's couplet in *Don Juan*,

All Virgil's lays are pure, except that horrid one,
Beginning with Formosum pastor Corydon.

The second book of the *Aeneid* was omitted from our reading of the epic of the Latin Poet. It can scarcely be necessary to add that I eagerly read the episode of Aeneas and Dido to myself. Meanwhile, I continued to express my own feelings, and my own thoughts, such as they were, in verse; writing two long poems, the scene of one of which was Kirkstall Abbey, so well known to me, that of the other being the Island of Malta; wherefore, I do not know, for it was to me utterly unknown.

In this course I persisted after being entered at the Inner Temple, alike in the chambers where I was supposed to be studying law, and in my lodgings in Keppel Street. Grotesquely ignorant still of "things in general," I at length found my way, with the MS. of *Randolph, a Tale of Polish Grief*, to Albemarle Street; and, familiar by my reading of Moore's *Life of Byron*, with his connection with the well-known Publishing Firm in that street, I asked to see Mr. Murray. 'The clerk I had addressed inquired if I wanted to see Mr. Murray on publishing business. I replied affirmatively. Surmising from my youthful appearance that the "business" was the publishing of a poem, he asked if that was so; and on my saying it was, he replied, "It would be quite useless to see Mr. Murray, for he never publishes poetry now."

The enlightenment acquired by that reply was no less than the disappointment, and I walked away a sadder and somewhat wiser youth. Many years later, I made the acquaintance of old "John Murray," and still enjoy friendly intercourse with his sons; nor do I doubt that, if I had not already found in Messrs. Macmillan a Firm of Publishers at once business-like, helpful, and considerate, the well-known house in Albemarle Street, where, at eighteen, I naturally met with so chilly a reception, might possibly have occupied that position. Indeed, the late John Murray published a pamphlet of mine at the time of the Russo-Turkish War, entitled *Russia before Europe*; and alike in

his time, and in that of his sons, I have had the pleasure of contributing to the pages of the *Quarterly Review* on several occasions.

Not entirely daunted, however, I went on equally disappointing pilgrimages to other Publishing Firms; until, at last, I received a more cordial reception from Messrs. Saunders & Ottley in Conduit Street, who, after reading the poem, said they would be happy to publish it, on my providing £30 towards the expense of paper, printing, and advertisements.

This was far from being what my ignorant belief in the magic of the word Poetry had led me to expect. But I had such absurd confidence in the merit of my callow Muse, that, having hitherto had no confidant in my hopes of at least inexpensive publication, I wrote to my Father, and asked him if he would provide the £30 named by Messrs. Saunders & Ottley. The reply came through my elder brother, and was to the effect that I was "not to make a fool of myself," but to stick to my legal studies.

A more reasonable reply could not well have been given; but my conversion to that view came later. I then made the same request to my uncle, Joseph Locke, recently returned to the House of Commons as member for Honiton in 1849.

To my delight, he replied that he should be very happy to stand godfather to my first-born, and enclosed a cheque for the required amount. His prompt kindness showed the width and literary

sympathy of his mind ; and, for some reason or another, perhaps, if I may say so without presumption, from an instinctive insight, born of his own successful life, into my inclination and capacity for Literature, he invariably encouraged my aspirations in that direction ; believing in my ultimate success long before I had written anything to justify his belief.

The number of copies sold of *Randolph* was seventeen ; and I cannot surmise who the persons were that wasted their money on it. But one critical journal observed that though the poem was evidently written by one too young for any prediction to be formed as to what the author might do at some future time, the bloom was bright and pretty. It was published anonymously in deference to what I knew would be the wish of my parents. But though it remained no secret for them, no word of reproach was addressed to me for its publication. Its meagre sale had the advantage of being instructive to me, and eradicated some of the simplicity bequeathed, as I have said, by my secluded and unworldly education. Though I soon found myself writing another "poem" entitled *Love and Liberty*, I no longer attempted to get it published. Its only merit, a slight one, was that it was somewhat more clearly conceived and rather better executed than its predecessor.

I hope this rather detailed account of my juvenile efforts will not cause the reader to think that something of the naïveté of early years still lingers.

My object has been to show that what has been my most cherished vocation in life was congenital, and the impulse as strong in early as in later years. But with the advance of time the critical instinct was being developed along with the creative one; and it was not till I wrote *The Season, a Satire*, that I first confronted the full perils of publicity. I had spoken of it to no one till it appeared; but as I learned afterwards, my uncle, who had been godfather to the anonymous volume of an earlier period, and who died shortly before *The Season* was published, had observed to some one, who repeated it to me, that he felt sure I was writing something that would be "good." *The Season* was composed, as I have said, partly on the slopes of Queensberry in Dumfriesshire, where I was shooting with him, and partly in the London streets as I walked homeward to my Chambers in the Temple after dining with friends. Possibly his favourable prognostic was fostered in some degree by the rather absent manner in which I trudged across burn and over heather, and which, I need hardly say, did not contribute to my skill as a sportsman or make the bag much heavier when we drove back to Moffat for the night.

The music of the mountain streams, the colour of the glowing heather, the undulations and ravines in the hills, the floating clouds and their skimming shadows on the bracken, these it was that occupied my observation more than the flushing by the dogs of a covey of young grouse or the

sudden flutter of an old blackcock, swiftly winging his way down wind. "Driving" was not resorted to in those days till late in the Autumn, when the birds had become too wild to be got at in any other way; and many a time, already drenched to the skin, did I sit inside what north-country folk call a stook of oats or barley, waiting for a warning call from a keeper crouching behind a rough low wall, and the swiftly approaching, and equally swiftly fleeing, packed covey. I am writing of the later half of the 'fifties; and I remember my uncle's delight, and the interest of us all, when he received and tried the newly devised breech-loader that soon ousted from use the clumsy powder and shot pouches and awkward ramrod. That breech-loader is in my possession still.

Before starting on our five-mile drive back to Moffat, then a small primitive Scotch village, but now, I am told, a much-frequented watering-place, we generally used to turn in for a brief time to the chief tenant on the moor, by name Dinwoodie, sometimes to dry ourselves a little, but as often, I think, to have a talk with the "braw," grown-up, bare-legged lassies of the household. We had to cross the railway, in our drive, at Beattock, and my uncle seemed still to gaze affectionately up the line, made years before under his supervision as "consulting engineer"; and he loved to recall how, before a Committee of the House of Commons, questioned by his friend Cockburn, afterwards Lord

Chief Justice, he had defended and advocated steep gradients against George Stephenson, who, from lack of education, maintained that no locomotive could ever ascend them. George Stephenson's son, Robert, a very differently trained and most accomplished man, was a guest at Moffat more than once, but never came out shooting with us, preferring geological excursions in the neighbourhood. Mr. Brassey, the well-known contractor, and his young sons were also frequently of the party. His eldest son, Lord Brassey, is one of the most valued friends of myself and my wife.

The reception of *The Season* was distinctly cordial, more than one critical notice of it expressing the opinion that it was the best Satire since Byron's *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*; and, if the days had been what they are at present, which happily they were not, it might possibly have had a notoriety anything but advantageous to the author. One journal remarked that it was a pity its frankly bold treatment of current manners and morals must necessarily restrict its circulation to one of the sexes, and that, if widely read in smoking-rooms, it would be rigidly excluded from the boudoir. It still is to be found among the author's collected works; and the reader of to-day, either man or woman, youth or maiden, will find it difficult to understand the prudishness of a former age. But Mrs. Grundy was still undethroned; and, I suppose in deference to her, one conspicuous publication dedicated to literary

criticism denounced it as grossly improper. Not from annoyance in all conscience, but partly from the buoyant spirits usually born of first success, and partly from the consciousness of the possession of a certain facility, I replied with a small volume, equally mordant I think, but necessarily less interesting, called *My Satire and its Censors*. Looking back on close upon half a century, and therefore with retrospective impartiality, I find it gravely erring in unjust personalities, but indicating withal that such satiric power as one appeared to have was only the seamy side of enthusiasm and romantic aspirations.

A second edition of *The Season* had soon to be issued; and if the author had even then employed the self-advertising methods which now seem all but universal, I daresay its popularity would have been yet greater than it was. I should think its satire is now regarded as singularly mild and decorous. I still sometimes hear some of its couplets quoted, and I have been pressed, not infrequently, to write of the present time in the same vein. I need scarcely add that, though the materials are abundant, the suggestion has not been acted on. I have sometimes thought that the painful position arising from inwardly debated and finally discarded religious dogmas, together with the sorrow caused by the circumstances of my dear Father's final illness, account for the more satiric and almost cynical passages in *The Season*. But, as I have said, a certain romantic longing

underlay it, and foreshadowed the wiser and, I trust, more generous tenor of later compositions.

I hope it will not be thought I have dwelt overmuch on *The Season*. If I have done so, it is because it seems to me to contain the germ of what Matthew Arnold called "the criticism of life"¹ to be gathered from one's works in their

¹ I will here append what seems to me a most interesting letter from Mr. Arnold, received in later years, respecting an article of mine which appeared, in 1881, in the *Contemporary Review* called "New and Old Canons of Criticism," in which I referred to his assertion that poetry was a "criticism of life":—

ATHENÆUM CLUB, Pall Mall, S.W.,
December 19th, 1881.

MY DEAR MR. AUSTIN—I have been overwhelmed with examinations, and it is only to-day, just before going into the country for Christmas, that I have been able to read your interesting article. It grapples seriously with the subject, it is very well written, and it contains some beautiful passages. Nothing is vainer than to criticise a criticism on oneself, and besides, your criticism is not yet finished. I will, however, venture to make three remarks on what you have written. The first is, that you yourself seem to me to entertain no doubt that poetry is "a criticism of life," if only these words are taken (as they ought to be taken) in a sufficiently large sense. Your objections all apply to cases in which the words are taken in a sense too narrow, and in which the indispensable proviso that the criticism shall be "according to the laws of poetic truth and poetic beauty," is not complied with.

The second is, that your remark as to the longevity of essays, as compared with poetry, surely requires to be corrected. Plato's *Gorgias* and *Symposium* are essays, and their longevity is surely pretty secure. Much prose is meant to move and delight as well as to instruct and convince, and though the best poetry must be ranked above it, a very great deal of poetry must be ranked below it. Pope's *Essay on Man* is to be ranked below it; Shelley's "My Soul is an Enchanted Boat" is to be ranked below it. This latter poem suffers from the "want of sound subject-matter"; it is (in my opinion) brilliant verbiage. Shelley's happy, though often inaccurate, translation of Plato's *Banquet* will outlast, I myself think, his "My Soul is an Enchanted Boat."

The third and last remark is, that to say that Shakespeare "offers no criticism of life," but "only presents a delineation, etc.," is the view of him which has led Taine to class him and Balzac as "a noble pair of brothers" together, and that such a result of itself ought to make a good critic suspicious of an account of Shakespeare which leads up to it. The truth is, Shakespeare, like Homer, offers a magnificent criticism of life. I have three volumes which have been sent to me—yours, Swinburne's,

entirety. In it is to be found the germ of everything in my future poems.

A disdain of habitual frivolity, ostentatious opulence, of material worldliness, and vulgar ambition is, I truly assert, their prevailing mark, together with love of a rural and simple life, tempered only by some acquaintance with—permit me again the phrase—things in general and public affairs. One's views doubtless have expanded with one's advance in life, and some little wisdom and understanding gradually took the place of irresponsible impulses. But *qualis ab incepto* is the impression left on my mind in now re-perusing *The Season*. Apart from that impression, the fact of its having been written so long ago allows me to feel towards it as though it had been written by some one else. In a certain sense it was. Its publication brought me many new acquaintances and some lasting friends, and confirmed me in my purpose to bid adieu to the Bar, follow my own instinct, and cast my bread on the waters of literature with a more free and full existence.

The regret some people express that they did not earlier arrive at a more just conception of life seems to me superfluous, not to say futile. Our mistakes—and no period of life is wholly free from them—are not the least instructive factors in our training. Most of our misfortunes are due to our own misjudgments and miscalculations, while our

and Palgrave's—all of which are lying on my table, waiting to be read during these Christmas holidays.—Very truly yours,

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

good fortune is a fortuitous felicity in the providing of which we ourselves have little or no share. For life is, or should be, a continuous education. Mine began, I have always felt, with the publication of *The Season* and the attainment of personal freedom.

I received, ten years after its publication, the following letter from one of our most distinguished living men of letters, who many years later became, and is now, one of my most cherished friends. But, notwithstanding its generosity, and the distinction of its writer, it is now impossible for me, and has long been impossible, to lend a whole-hearted, or anything like a whole-hearted sympathy, to a work whose levity and injustice are manifest on the face of it. It may have some of the vigour, but all the faults of irresponsible youth.

Aug. 26/73.

DEAR SIR—I have read your satire *The Season* with the greatest pleasure. It is a poem full of force, freshness, and feeling, and it is extremely refreshing to think that we have still one poet left who can use the English language in the true way. There is no metre which is so sure a test of a man's powers as the heroic couplet. You *must* either succeed or fail in it, and you have succeeded. I found or seemed to find many faults of taste, and a certain amount of carelessness, but I nowhere felt that inexcusable coldness or languor which is sure to damn a poem written in what should be the most idiomatic and forcible of our metres. Everywhere the feeling has prompted the word and the word goes straight to its mark. You will perhaps think my taste bad, but I own that to my mind *The Season* is the most successful of your poems which I have read. This is far from

being meant to imply that I should think the public right in neglecting *The Human Tragedy*, which, to judge from the fragment I have read, must have been a work of high poetical merit. But the man who could write *The Season* is a power, and I should be inclined to fancy that the comparative indifference of the public to the poem which succeeded it was not unconnected with the feeling I experienced myself in reading *Madonna's Child*. It appears to me that in this poem much of your native force is lost by the attitude of contemplation which you assume, and which you explain by declaring yourself a neutral in the poem, a mere spectator of two antagonistic forces, Faith and Reason. By this means Godfrid and Olympia lose much of their human character and become the representatives of two Ideas. Now the whole bent of my mind and the whole force of my predilections or prejudices (whichever they are) is opposed to that Idealism in poetry which I consider equivalent to Liberalism in politics. You yourself most justly, I thought, said in your paper in the *Standard* that good poetry was not consciously philosophical. What Aristotle, whom I see you quote in your preface to *Madonna's Child*, meant to say was, I take it, that poets like Homer were so true to Nature in their representations that their minds had evidently gone through a tacit philosophical process of observation and generalisation (excuse these priggish and crackjaw words) which the philosopher goes through consciously and laboriously. But the view which you expound as to Faith and Reason—and again the fourfold aspect of *The Human Tragedy*—of which I see you speak in the preface to *The Golden Age*, in these I seem to find you employing philosophical *analysis*. But your treatment, you will say, is not philosophical. Nor is it. It is poetical and in a very high degree. But it lacks that force and fire and fervour which *The Season* shows, and which, as it seems to me, you get there because like all the best poets you are *an actor*. I should presume to say that if Godfrid and Olympia are to be taken as representatives of two conflicting forces we should have been told more about themselves. In the same way I think *The Golden Age*, though I read it with great

pleasure (as indeed no one could fail to do from its polished language and its generous feeling), is inferior as a satire to *The Season*, because it is colder and more contemplative. In *The Season* you advance valiantly against actual plain and palpable evil, you hit hard and straightforward, and you are warmed and invigorated by your own action. In *The Golden Age* you start with a thesis half fanciful, half philosophical, which you illustrate by instances. So while in one poem your "facts and feelings" (to use your own phrase) come to you direct—in the other both are to a certain extent coloured by your philosophical axiom. Of course I was never impertinent enough to hope that you would adopt my point of view. No man can force his own feelings—a man of your native power less than others. But I still cannot help thinking as a critic that you waste your force by the isolation which (pardon my plainness) you impose on yourself. You are plainly, inevitably, without shadow of doubt, a poet of action, yet you insist on making of yourself a poet of contemplation. You are too clear-sighted not to see the results of this habit in others, and yet you consign yourself—man of action though you are and ought to be—to what you consider the inevitable. I remember being much struck in the same way with the impotent conclusion of a very striking book, *The Piccadilly Papers*, in which the author having exposed most clearly the rottenness of modern "society," found a remedy for all human ills in "Spiritualism." This is what I should call a lamentable instance of deliberate opium-eating on the part of a natural Conservative. My own feeling is that all gentlemen should die, if they must die, fighting with all the power they possess. Nor have I one spark of the hope with which, as I think, you beguile yourself that anything good will come out of the deluge when it arrives. Aristocracy when once overborne by brute force will never rise again in the Christian epoch. There is, as I see things, no remedy against anarchy but Caesarism—and God save England from either. It is not the middle classes or even the upper classes which I would save from democracy, but Civil Liberty. All this comes out of your own poems—so you must pardon my

diffuseness in consideration of my zeal. Frankness I know you will pardon, being yourself frank. I hope soon to read your *Poetry of the Period*.—Yours very faithfully,

Composition went on, and so, from lack of foresight, did the mistakes. But I never at any period manipulated my life, or hastened or delayed publication from calculations of self-interest. Perhaps it would have been better had I sometimes done so. The name of *The Human Tragedy* was first given by me to a poem in two cantos, written in an almost improvised medley of romance and rebellion, the metre being the *ottava rima*, and the treatment of it the manner Byron avowedly imitated from Pulci's *Morgante Maggiore*. When, some years later, *Madonna's Child* appeared, John Henry, afterwards Cardinal, Newman wrote to me that *ottava rima* had always seemed to him the noblest of all metres for serious compositions, such as was that of the little poem, and *The Human Tragedy*, as it now stands.

THE ORATORY,
April 8, 1873.

MY DEAR SIR—I thank you very much for your great kindness in presenting to me your new Poem, and also for the words in addition with which you accompanied your gift.

If there was no other inducement to read it, the metre would itself have been sufficient; for, of all metres, that which you have chosen is to my taste the most exquisite, as admitting of grace, freedom, strength, pathos, and humour, and suited for narrative, descriptive, or meditative poetry more than any other.

And I think you have known how to avail yourself of its capabilities. I should be taking a liberty if I expressed in the more exact language of a critic the great pleasure which the perusal of it has given me.

Of course there is one respect, in which it has given me, not pleasure, but pain. I should not be honest if I did not show my sorrow for your appropriation to yourself of the words (if I understand them) of the French writer whom you quote in your Preface—and which you seem to follow up in the beautiful stanzas, 70, 71, of your poem—though they are greatly relieved by stanza 132, and it is my fervent hope that the day will come when the poetry which so easily flows from your pen may be the expression, not only of a sympathy, but a faith, in Catholic verities.—I am, my dear Sir, sincerely yours,

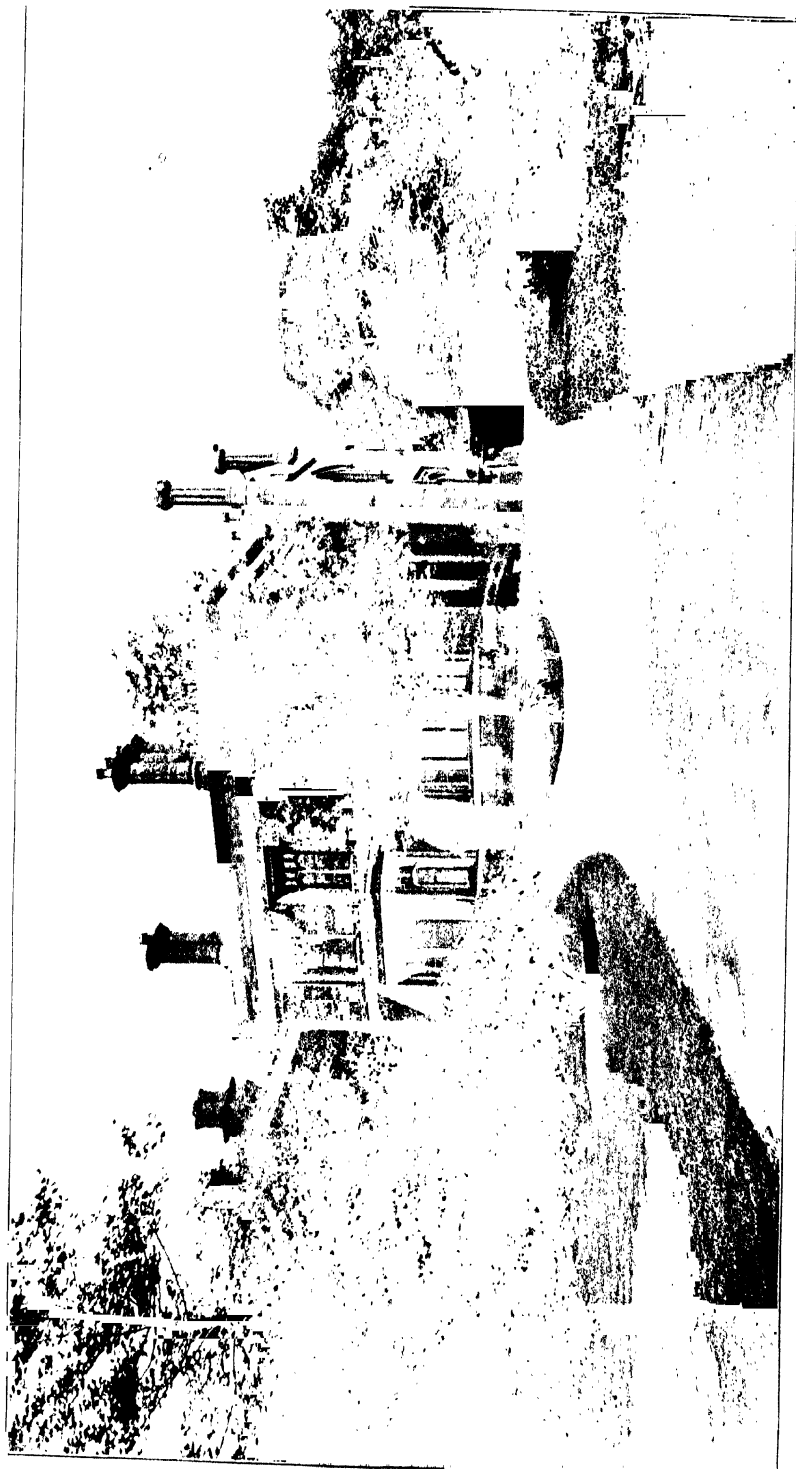
JOHN H. NEWMAN.

ALFRED AUSTIN, Esq.

But it is scarcely a matter of personal opinion that for a mixture of seriousness and levity, romantic and Rabelaisian sentiment, it is the best, if not the only medium of metrical expression. I will not affect to say that I regard this first *Human Tragedy* as wanting in either quality. But it was written with reckless rapidity, and rather as a vent for one's then state of mind than with the object of obtaining readers or critical approval. It has long been withdrawn from circulation. The name of that first edition was ridiculously in excess of its story, or of its indirect moral, if indeed it had the latter at all. But its free-and-easy, it might almost be said insolent, style secured for it a certain amount of uncritical sympathy and even admiration. Shortly after its publication, a legal friend brought me a well-

known daily paper, containing a review of it, that ended with the expression of the opinion that the author ought to be prosecuted for the suppression of indecent publications. "What an opportunity," said my friend, "of advertising both the poem and the author. Bring an action against the paper and you are sure to win it, for the charge is not only calumnious but absurd." I did not follow the advice, but on the following morning, according to previous intention, left England for Italy.

I have described, in another part of this Biography, my informal farewell to the Bar, my final adieu to London, my accidental discovery of Hailey Lodge, and my financially foolish orders for its enlargement before departing to Italy. My abandonment of a possibly lucrative profession, and apparently unprofitable departure for Rome, judged by all the canons of good sense, seemed to be the most reckless of all the mistakes I ever committed. But the sequel showed the truth to be exactly the reverse, the very pivot on which whatever I have since done, such as it is, has wholly turned. Still, an impartial arbitrator at the time would have said that it was a glaring instance of midsummer madness and youthful presumption. Of the small means at my disposal, much had already been spent in what our neighbours call *menus plaisirs*; and though I purposed my sojourn in Rome for the Winter and Spring should be inexpensive, I had no scheme for adding to my



HEADINGLEY.
1835 to 1857.

income. I went to Rome because I longed to go to Rome, and I have had every reason to bless the day when I indulged my desire. But my uncle Mr. Locke's widow, who had hitherto shown me marked partiality, and had at her disposal the bulk of the considerable fortune left by him, did not conceal her displeasure at my departure, and at my leaving the Bar.

The umbrage caused by that step was at the same time increased by my tacit refusal to entertain the idea of a marriage for which she would have handsomely provided. I recked nothing of all this. I only exclaimed with Aeneas, *Italiam petimus*, and crossed the Channel with a light heart and an eager mind. It was the tide in my affairs that led on to whatever good fortune of a more spiritual kind has befallen me since.

But, as I shall doubtless have to say elsewhere, perhaps more than once, a resort to what has since become my more natural form of expression will do better justice to what I was feeling at the time.

It is an early intimation of that native impulse which, in due course, never afterwards deserted me.

FREE!

Joy! Free, at last, from vulgar thrall:
No longer need my voice be dumb;
And quicker far than thou canst call,
O Italy, I come!

To feel me the adopted heir
Of Art and Nature wed and blent,
In days of trouble routed care ;
In these will bring content.

To know the world is not a mart,
The soul a lackey, life a shame,
Will scare the past, allay its smart,
Almost annul the blame.

Away with all these makeshift toys,
Provisional for heart and sense,
Which kept a useful equipoise
'Gainst sheer indifference !

'Twas well enough, whilst ill at ease,
To parley with each passing whim,
Which, though accredited to please,
Was pleasure's pseudonym.

And if one pleasure lure me still—
Just one—I scarcely can but thank,
'Twere wisdom not to linger till
It, like the rest, be rank.

Bear me, rough breakers, swiftly on !
Yield, mist-wrapped mountains, passage through ;
I fret, I fever, to be gone
To skies and waters blue :

Where, loosed from trammels, one may still
Complete the functions fettered here ;
Heart unsuborned, unbiassed will,
And intellect sincere.

My senses with my spirit meet
To urge me from this northern soil,
Ere stealthy Winter's ambushed sleet
Swoop on autumnal spoil.

The sickle hath performed its work,
The storm-gusts sweep the aspens bare,
Careering clouds and shadows mirk
Cower the disheartened air.

No swallow circles round the roof,
No chirp redeems the dripping shed ;
The very gables frown reproof—
Why not already fled ?

I fly. Decked forms and landscape bare,
Enticements robbed of every spell,
Frivolities no longer fair,
Ye bubbles all, farewell !

CHAPTER V

Journey to Rome — Italia! — Lago Maggiore — Rome — Charles J. Hemans—*Two Visions*—Rides in the Campagna—Church Music in Rome—*At Shelley's Grave*—Letters from Lady Shelley—*Shelley's Death*.

How leisurely one went to Rome fifty years ago! I remember bidding a willing farewell to what we should now call a slow train at Geneva, lingering along the Savoy side of Lake Lemman in the imaginary company of Rousseau, Saint-Preux, Héloïse, and Madame de Warens, never quite under their spell, but not yet quite liberated from their unwholesome enchantments, and recalling some of the wisdom of *Émile*, notably of the Savoyard Vicar, and likewise some of its mischievous sciolism. How appropriate is the verdict of a French moralist on the characters of Rousseau and Voltaire, the other chief Gallic man of letters associated with Geneva and its neighbourhood, "When I think of one I prefer the other." But Voltaire has not impregnated Ferney with himself as the southern bank of Lake Geneva is impregnated with the "self-torturing sophist," as Byron designated Rousseau. How virile, alike in his

melancholy and his mockery, is the English Poet, compared with these two Frenchmen! Betake yourself to the other bank of the lake, or sail upon its now smooth, now turbulent, surface, and the air “breathes, burns” of the never-to-be-satisfied-in-time Pilgrim of Eternity. It is an abiding resource to be able to summon at once to the memory passages from a Poet inspired by the very scenes on which one is gazing. No poetry is thoroughly appreciated until it is known by heart, and that perhaps is one of the reasons why years are required for the Appellate Jurisdiction of Time to assign poets their just place in the Aristocracy of Letters. The far-and-wide wanderings of Byron through lands familiar by name, but not yet rendered trite and almost vulgar by “personally-conducted” tours, gave him splendid opportunities for descriptive, pathetic, and majestic verse. The plains of Waterloo, the castled crags of Rhineland, the lofty and aloof snow-peaks, the companionable lakes, the solemn solitudes, whispering pine-forests, fearlessly leaping cataracts, fierce thunderstorms, and saffron-dappled meadows of Switzerland, were then materials awaiting some master muse; and in Italy, Greece, Albania, he found equally fertile themes to set to sonorous verse-scales and cadences. The decline and fall of the Roman Empire had found an adequate historian in Gibbon’s grandiose prose. But Poetry had yet to add the spell of Northern meditation and melancholy to the prose epitaph on its Imperial Past.

How what is written retrospectively takes its

character and pace from the time and the conditions it is recalling! Fifty years ago one loitered very leisurely, no matter how impatient one might have been before starting to get to one's destination. One has been to Italy so frequently since then that, to be accurate, it needs a conscientious call on memory to be quite sure which route it was that first brought one there. But now there come back to me Vevey, Chillon, Montreux, Villeneuve, as yet unmarred by hotels, *pensions*, and tramways, mere hamlets lying and dozing like weary wayfarers along the eastern end of the lake, and the unseen lapping of the water against the shore in the vanished twilight, as I waited to mount the Rhone Valley up to Sion and the Pass of the Simplon. How vividly I feel the night passed at Sion!

All is still in the little town,
Now the belfry sounds eleven.
All is still, and the moon looks down
On the snow-peaks far and the near ones brown,
From an untroubled heaven.

With like distinctness can I recall the morning walk up to Château Tourbillon, lying on the closely nibbled grass, and gazing across the wide plain that stretches below the castle in the direction in which one was thus slowly wending. The only living occupant of the diligence beside the driver and myself was a marmoset, labelled like luggage, for Genoa; and there are worse companions on a journey than a silent one. The cheerful carillon of the horses' bells, the occasional crack of the driver's

whip, the swift zigzagging down the hills, the slow ascents, where one got down and gathered heather and harebells to the humming of mountain bees and those "unsown flowers of the air," mountain butterflies, the fragrance, the freshness, the freedom of it all, how different it was from the summary "En voiture, messieurs et dames!" the "Pronto, Partenza!" of these later days, the whistling, the screaming, the smoke, the stench, the grime, the martinetism, the close packing with rather too many of one's fellow-creatures, their guide-books, and no doubt kindly but tedious chatter, to "kill the time" that, in older and simpler conditions, never seemed too long.

Shortly after traversing the *col* of the Pass, the lofty landscape seemed to be gradually growing softer, warmer, and more human. The crags overhead looked less awful, their fronts less furrowed and deterrent, and the slopes below them greener and kindlier. There were fewer forests of aloof-looking pines, there were open spaces cheered by vine and walnut trees; the belfries crowning the hamlet houses of prayer were more graceful, the peasant folk less churlish, and saluted one as one passed along; and then, suddenly, there was a tall granite wayside Cross, on the transverse arms of which was engraven, in deep-cut letters, the magical word, ITALIA! I trembled for joy; and then, as one does from a momentary plunge into chill water, glowed all over with the after-warmth of that exhilarating word. More silvery sounded the music-

making bells round the necks of the diligence horses, that tossed their heads for pleasure, as much as to say, "This is something like a land." There were walnut and Spanish chestnut trees everywhere, whose trunks and boughs were what painters call "full of drawing." It was the season of truce between Autumn and what was as yet hardly Winter, but rather the decline of the year, when sun and wind seemed to have cried a halt to change, and everything was still. Time seemed to have tempered waning beauty by a heightened and almost hectic colour; and lo! Lago Maggiore lay smooth and soundless in the downward distance, the Borromean Islands floating on its surface, and little Baveno—for little it then was—gazing on them from the shore. The eyes of the peasant girls glowed with a more tender and gentle light; the ripple of their hair gleamed glossier and more ample; they watched the traveller with a fearlessly familiar gaze; they saluted graciously as we passed, and followed with their sympathizing eyes as we zig-zagged swiftly and merrily down the mountain road. The very names of the hamlets were softer, "syllables writ on satin," even the more majestic ones, like Domo d' Ossola, retaining something of the *morbidezza* that ever underlies the Italian tongue. I have sometimes thought that the Italians, living in a land of hill and valley distances, came to end all their words with a vowel, because vowel sounds carry farther than do consonants, prolonging themselves through the air.

There was one little Inn at Baveno, and I was bound for it, and on either side of it were a few primitive shops, if you like to call them so, under solid low arcades, and these were all now coming into view. Then the ear grew sensitive as the eye, and I heard the *Ave Maria* bells ringing :

Ave Maria ! 'Tis the hour of prayer :
Ave Maria ! 'Tis the hour of love.

For Baveno was praying. Out of the cloister of a little church there came, as the wheels of the diligence grated on the rough stony pavement of its one street, a Procession chanting the Litany of Loreto, and carrying the Banner of the " Consoler of the Afflicted." The beauty of Roman Catholic ceremonials is that they not only comfort the believing Faithful, but appeal to those likewise who do not accept the dogmas of the Roman Church, awakening in them, so they are not polemical fanatics, a sentiment of pious sympathy. Who could refuse to join in that simple Lakeside hymn ?

Mystical Rose ! Pray for us !

Walter Scott, the most staunch of Protestants, could not refuse, as witness his lyric, so exquisitely set to music by Schubert. Byron could not refuse, even in his defiant progress through *Don Juan*, when he wrote :

Ave Maria ! blessed be the hour,
The time, the clime, the spot where I so oft
Have felt that moment in its fullest power
Sink o'er the earth so beautiful and soft,

While swung the deep bell in the distant tower,
Or the faint dying day-hymn stole aloft,
And not a breath crept through the rosy air,
And yet the forest leaves seemed stirred with prayer.

One was too young in those days to be exacting in things material, and I only remember I found the little inn very comfortable, though the fastidious youth of to-day would probably think otherwise of it, if it still existed. But it has long since vanished, and been replaced by a Grand Hôtel, and another, and another, and another, all with equally flaring and flaunting designations, ill according with the unostentatious lake, the immutable mountains, and the Isola dei Pescatori, seemingly but an arrow-shot from the shore. It may be that, with memory enchanted by distance, I remember over-vividly and estimate too highly one meal especially partaken of on the Isola dei Pescatori. I believe the luxury I am going to mention is now as crowdedly sought for as once whitebait was at Greenwich, or were maids-of-Honour at Richmond. But of one thing I feel sure. The dainty dish then set before me is no longer as carefully prepared as it was then. Sitting-room in the nowadays sense there was none, though there were plenty of seats in the little hostel-restaurant where dwelt the happy family whose acquaintance I made that day, and room for me was promptly found among them. Such dark, rippling hair! Such radiant eyes! Such richly coloured cheeks, such bow-shaped lips, such

faultless teeth, brawny arms, ample busts, incessant talk, and welcoming smiles ! And what busy dark-stained fingers as they deftly peeled the newly gathered walnuts ! On the table before them were small bowls, holding in various depths of fulness pale-coloured transparent liquid. How pleased they seemed to see me, father, mother, and beautiful daughters ! Had I come far ? Was I not hungry ? Should they not fry for me some lake perch in the fresh walnut oil, for such it was ? They liked Englishmen so much, and they loved England, for it was helping forward the making of Italy. Such perch I never ate before or since, nor was I ever in more delightful company. I was young and took no heed of the morrow, and neither did they. We had never been together before ; we should never be together again ; and, since I as yet spoke their tongue but brokenly, they had to help me out, and this necessitated, did it not ? a certain amount of proximity and merry laughter, followed by consoling explanations, and the blind God knows what not, and all with the approbation of *il Babbo*, and to the delight of *la Mamma*, who looked on smilingly, and knew exactly what it was all worth. And when I was forced to go, I told them I was enamoured of them all ; whereupon they lifted up their siren voices, and averred they one and all felt *similmente*, and I was so *gentile* ; and I declared they were *belline*, and *carine*, and I should like to pass the rest of my days with them. And then,

with rustling kirtles, they accompanied me to the primitive landing-stage, and with glittering eyes followed the receding boat ; and when I still could see their Juno-moulded forms, but their Olympian eyes no more, they broke into a song the notes of which reached me like a far-off carillon, but all I could catch of the words were, "Addio, mio bel, addio!" "Amore," and again "Amore," and "Non ti scordar! Addio!" And I sat in the boat somewhat sadly, and thought how delightful life might be, if it were only a little different from what it really is.

But there came an end to the days of Saint Luke's Summer on Lago Maggiore ; and, loud above late Autumn gusts and pelting of mountain rain, I again heard the august name of Rome. How it rained in Turin ! How, for three nights and days, it rained without respite at Milan ! I read, for the first time, by blazing subalpine logs, *I Promessi Sposi*, still the most classical, and therefore the one most likely the longest to endure, of Italian prose romances ; long after the pornographic pretentiousness of later days is replaced by better literary taste than the present. I was beginning to read the more simple, straightforwardly written Italian books with tolerable comfort, and I remember that, at Genoa, where the narrow streets and passages were running with water, I bought and read an Italian translation of *Les Misérables* that had just appeared. I did not want to have my first sight of Rome till

this generally expected spell of Autumn wet had passed away, as it shortly did. Then I took ship to Cività Vecchia, and thence started, behind jingling bells, for the Imperial City.

But dusk had fallen before I reached it, and so it mattered little that I entered by the Porta Aurelia, perhaps the least impressive of the many approaches to Rome; and I was driven, swinging and swaying on ill-fitted wheels, all making a separate track for themselves, over the unevenly paved, scarcely lighted streets of the Trastevere. I could just see the colossal outlines of Saint Peter's and the Castle of Sant' Angelo looming through the twilight, and in the dark narrow ways here and there a figure with a cloak flung across from shoulder to shoulder and carefully covering the mouth, making one feel as if the stiletto-bearing emissaries of Roderigo or Caesar Borgia had come to life again, and were ready to strike the assigned victim, and then vanish into the darkness. But within an hour of the diligence driving into the Piazza di Spagna, and drawing up at the doors of the Albergo di Londra, the moon had risen, and it was the November moon at full. So I went to the Coliseum alone, yet not alone; for Commodus and Christian Martyrs accompanied me, and I heard in its mysterious and majestic solitude the roar of underground lions hotly breathing for their prey, and grave Roman Senators and pitiless Roman matrons applauding Dacian gladiators as they advanced, retreated, rallied, and struck at each

other's lives. And as I wended innward, and met ever and anon a batch of French Zouaves patrolling the deserted streets, I found myself murmuring to the Night the exquisite line Ovid makes Paris address to Helen :

Excipe me lecto nocte silente tuo,

and then slept the sleep of the weary traveller.

I had come to Rome without an introduction to any one, save Messrs. Plowden, the Bankers, and Gibson, the Sculptor ; and I had made the acquaintance of an English lady, her grown-up son and daughter, and a girl friend of the latter, on board the steamer from Genoa. Hotels were fewer in those days than in these, the only ones I can remember being the Londra, Europa, and Inghilterra, all either in the Piazza di Spagna or near it, and the Minerva, hard by the Pantheon. I selected the Londra till I could find bachelor apartments in its vicinity. Messrs. Plowden named two or three to me, simple but comfortable enough, if I was not luxurious ; and before the following day was over, I had taken two rooms close to the Trinità de' Monti steps, next to the house where Keats died. They were spacious enough, and being on the *terzo piano*, they offered from the balcony of the sitting-room a view across Rome to Saint Peter's and the Pamfili-Doria Gardens ; a soaring and motionless umbrella pine in the latter bounding the prospect.

The first thing to do was to become fairly well

acquainted with the Italian tongue, the grammar of which I had carefully conned before leaving England. Prepared to that extent, and with the aid of one's Latin and French vocabulary, I resorted to a short cut by getting a professor to come to me every day for an hour, and translating off-hand to him the political leaders of *The Times*, that had for him a keen interest, limited as his political reading was, thanks to the paternal government of Pio Nono, to the *Civiltà Cattolica*, and the *Courier de Rome*. I have no doubt I made a most amusing hash of the contents of the "Thunderer," but the Roman gravity of my teacher remained unruffled, and I always went near enough to a translation of the original for him to grasp my meaning, and to correct my blunders. The consequence was that, in a fortnight or so, I could speak Italian, at least without grammatical offence and so as to make myself understood. The absolute bareness of my sitting-room was displeasing even to my Spartan taste; and this was soon corrected by applying to a Roman "noble," whom Messrs. Plowden recommended, and who lent me, for a small sum, half a dozen portraits of his ancestors, and a copy of Raphael's well-known portrait of himself, to which I gave the place of honour. As for meals, I breakfasted in my lodgings, had a light luncheon at Nazarri's in the Piazza di Spagna, when occasion permitted of it, and dined at the *table d'hôte* of the Londra, where I made a certain number of

acquaintances, but formed no friendships, according to the meaning that word conveys to my mind.

One valued friend I soon made, where or how I cannot remember—Charles James Hemans, the son of the Poetess. He was like no other human being I have ever known; not a monk, yet semi-eremitical; saintly but not sacerdotal, modestly erudite in everything that appertained to Rome, Pagan, Papal, architectural, archaeological, and aesthetic. On his face there shone that peculiar and winning smile to be seen only in the holy, the good, and the wholly unselfish. His companionship had in it something of the peaceful sacredness of the sanctuary, affording me a refuge and a rest from that distressful rejection of the dogmas in which I had been educated, without losing reverence for creeds and rituals to which I could, as I have described elsewhere, no longer yield assent. I do not think Hemans himself wrote poetry, but his society had, it will easily be understood, a something poetic in it that rendered it doubly congenial to me. Possibly it was that vein in me, conjoined with my respectful attitude to what he held dear in the sphere of belief and devotion, and my eager desire to learn all I could concerning Rome from his lips, that rendered my companionship in turn not unwelcome to him. He wrote, as I have said, no verse, as far as I know; but he had written and published more than one volume respecting Rome, full of valuable

information, but in a prose of the most curiously hybrid character, produced, I suspect, from a profound study of German and ecclesiastical Latin. Sentences, and even paragraphs, beginning with a long adverb, and roaming interminably much in the manner of a Papal allocation, were to him evidently satisfactory and inevitable form of expression. For reasons of economy, his books were printed in Rome by workmen totally ignorant of English; the result naturally being that numbers of textual errors escaped his eye, and added to the singularity of his style. Fortunately he did not speak as he wrote, but answered inquiries and conveyed instruction with simple lucidity.

The six months I spent in Rome were almost wholly barren of poetic production; but, as I had come to Rome for Rome's own sake, and for the quiet instruction and enjoyment I expected and received from it, I did not at the time trouble myself with that circumstance. I did not then, any more than since, regard poetry as something to be produced by the mere exercise of the will; and during my first sojourn in Rome, the occasions were few that spontaneously gave birth to it. The longest poem, and it is not of any great length, of that date was *Two Visions*, and was the outcome of a sleepless night, as I lay listening to the plashing of the fountain in the Square below :

TWO VISIONS

WRITTEN, 1863. REVISED, 1889

I

The curtains of the night were folded
Round sleep-entangled sense ;
So that the things I saw were moulded,
I know not how, nor whence.

But I beheld a smokeless city,
Built upon jutting slopes,
Up whose steep paths, as if for pity,
Stretched loosely-hanging ropes.

III

Withal, of many who ascended,
No one appeared to use
This aid, allowed in days since mended,
When folks had weaker thews.

IV

The men, still animal in vigour,
Strode stalwart and erect ;
But on their brows, in placid rigour,
Reigned sovereign Intellect.

Women round-limbed, sound-lunged, full-breasted,
Walked at a rhythmic pace ;
Yet not the less, for that, invested
With every female grace.

VI

Fearless, unveiled, and unattended,
Strolled maidens to and fro :
Youths looked respect, but never bended
Obsequiously low.

VII

And each with other, sans condition,
Held parley brief or long,
Without provoking coarse suspicion
Of marriage, or of wrong.

VIII

All were well clad, but none were better,
And gems beheld I none,
Save where there hung a jewelled fetter,
Symbolic, in the sun.

IX

I saw a noble-looking maiden
Close Dante's solemn book,
And go, with crate of linen laden,
And wash it in the brook.

Anon, a broad-browed poet, dragging
A load of logs along,
To warm his hearth, withal not flagging
In current of his song.

XI

Each one some handicraft attempted,
Or helped to till the soil :
None but the aged were exempted
From communistic toil :

XII

Which was nor long nor unremitting,
Since shared in by the whole ;
Leaving to each one, as is fitting,
Full leisure for the Soul.

XIII

Was many a group in allocution
On problems that delight,
And lift, when e'en beyond solution,
Man to a nobler height.

XIV

And oftentimes was brave contention,
Such as beseems the wise ;
But always courteous abstention
From over-swift replies.

XV

Age lorded not, nor rose the hectic
Up to the cheek of Youth ;
But reigned throughout their dialectic
Sobriety of truth.

XVI

And if a long-held contest tended
To ill-defined result,
It was by calm consent suspended
As over-difficult :

XVII

And verse or music was suggested,
Then solitude of night :
Whereby the senses are invested
With spiritual sight.

XVIII

So far, the city. All around it,
Olive, or vine, or corn ;
Those having pressed, or trod, or ground it,
By these 'twas townward borne,

XIX

And placed in halls unbarred though splendid
With none to overlook,
And whither each at leisure wended,
And, what he wanted, took.

XX

And men saluted one the other,
Or as they passed or stood,
“ Let us still love and labour, brother ;
For life is sweet and good.”

XXI

I saw no crippled forms nor meagre,
 None smitten by disease :
 Only the old, nor loth nor eager,
 Dying by kind degrees.

XXII

And when, without or pain or trouble,
 They sank as sinks the sun,
 “This is the sole Inevitable,”
 All said ; “ His will be done ! ”

XXIII

And went, with music softly swelling,
 Where land o'erlooks the sea,
 Over the corse piled herbs sweet-smelling,
 Consumed, and so set free.

XXIV

Past ocean wave and mountain daisy
 As curled the perfumed smoke,
 The notes grew faint, the vision hazy :—
 Straining my sense, I woke.

* * * * *

XXV

Swift I arose. Soft winds were stirring
 The curtains of the Morn,
 Promise of day, by signs unerring,
 Lovely as e'er was born.

XXVI

But here the pleasant likeness ended
 Between the cities twain :
 Level and straight these streets extended
 Over an easy plain.

XXVII

Withal, the people who thus early
 Began to troop and throng,
 With curving back and visage surly
 Toiled painfully along.

XXVIII

Groups of them met at yet closed portals,
And huddled round the gate,
Patient, as smit by the Immortals,
And helots as by Fate.

XXIX

Full many a cross-crowned front and steeple
Clave the cerulean air :
As grew the concourse of the people,
They rang to rival prayer.

XXX

On their confronting walls were posted
Placards in glaring type,
Whereof there was not one but boasted
Truth full-grown, round, and ripe.

XXXI

And, with this self-congratulation,
Each one the other banned,
With threats of durable damnation
From the Eternal Hand.

XXXII

Surmounting these, were Forms forbidding
Disputes about the Flood ;
Since, in such points divine unthridding,
Shed had been human blood.

XXXIII

From arch and alley sodden wretches
Crept out in half attire,
And groped for fetid husks and vetches
In heaps of tossed-out mire ;

XXXIV

Until disturbed by horses' trample,
And faces fair and gay,
Which, sleek and warm, with ermines ample
And glittering diamond spray.

XXXV

That lightly flecked the classic ripple
Of their flower-scented hair,
For shivering child and leprous cripple
Had not a look to spare.

XXXVI

In garments with the morn ill mated,
Anon came youths along ;
From side to side they oscillated,
And trolled a shameful song.

•

XXXVII

Thereat my heart, this longwhile throbbing,
With teardrops sought to ease
O'erwelling woe, and, wildly sobbing,
I fell upon my knees.

•

XXXVIII

And made irreverent by the fluster
Of sorrow's fierce extreme,
I cried, "O unjust Heaven! be juster,
And realise my dream!"

XXXIX

Up streamed the sun, and straight were shining
Steeple, and sill, and roof :
To my hot prayer and rash repining
A visible reproof.

XL

Rebuked, I rose from genuflexion,
And, ceasing to blaspheme,
Curtained mine eyes for introspection
Of the departed dream,

XLI

Where men saluted one the other,
In street, or field, or wood,
"Let us still love and labour, brother ;
For life is sweet and good."

XLII

And I resolved, by contrast smitten,
To live and strive by Law ;
And first to write, as here are written,
The Visions Twain I saw.

ROME, *April* 1863.

At Shelley's Grave, Fontana di Trevi, Chi è?
and one or two sonnets, are the only other poems I can remember and associate with that Roman Winter and Spring of 1862-63. Over'and above the fact that I had said, I suppose, all that as yet I had to say, I was so thoroughly immersed in my majestic surroundings and all they recalled, that the surrender to them of myself was only natural, leaving me a contented recipient, not only of what lay within the circuit of the walls of the Imperial City, but of the Roman Campagna, far as eye could see or the saddle carry me. The exclusively studious existence has never sufficed me ; nor do I regard it as the best for the poetic temperament, which needs, in even an exceptional degree, the corrective of an open-air existence, masculine exercise, some little share in society, in a word, occasional participation in everything human. Rome then afforded opportunities for indulgence in all these. For a very modest sum one could hire a riding-horse from Jarrett, whose stables were in the Piazza del Popolo ; and my light weight, together with being, like Jarrett himself, a Yorkshireman, probably made the monthly price less to me than to other customers. When I joined the Hunt, I rather

think it was more for the sake of the in-and-out gallops along the pathless gullies and ravines of the Campagna than to be in "at the death."

The fox generally had the best of it; for, as soon as he grew tired of giving the hounds a lead, and showing them the country, he ran to earth, and, unless the Hunt was prepared to engage in a large amount of digging out, he was perfectly safe against disturbance. His security was not unwelcome to me; for, while another spin, if desired, was easily to be had, a sunny contemplative hour or two were at one's choice, if one preferred to let the field fade away beyond dip and distance. Then, while larks trebled upward, and got lost to sight but not to sound, I could trace, with loose bridle-rein, the construction of shepherds' hovels out of vanished villas, discern fragmentary temples of the gods of an abdicated Creed stuck into rubble walls, and little Madonna-propitiating oil lamps suspended in cracked recesses of down-toppled Pagan shrines. "Signore! Signore! mi dia un baioccho! Qualche cosina, per carità!" "A half-penny for love's sake!" Who could refuse, especially when the petitioner had in her cheeks "the bloom of young desire," the budding make and mould of Juno in a raiment of rags, and an importunity not to be denied? The prayer once answered, unembarrassed discourse would follow. But in these fair descendants of Shepherd Kings the words oftenest recurring are *fame* and *febbre*, hunger and fever; and one leaned over one's

saddle-bow wondering that out of such scant sustenance such loveliness could be begotten. *Fortes creantur fortibus*; and it takes a long time to eradicate the transmitted strength of the offspring of the forceful sons of Romulus and Sabine women. There are so many things in Roman Story, so many centuries of Roman dominion, to suggest thought; and they are not over even yet. Riding homeward with intermittent aqueduct for guide, suddenly I would hear the bray of French bugles, and remembered who was momentary master of Rome just then, according to the chorus in Byron's *Deformed Transformed*:

The Black Bands came over
The Alps and the snow.

They have melted away now, and, unlike the snow, with no sign nor prospect of returning. Then once again the *Ave Maria* bells fell a-ringing; and one felt, as "emotion recollected in tranquillity" enabled one to do, many a long year after:

The last warm gleams of sunset fade
From cypress spire and stonepine dome,
And, in the twilight's deepening shade,
Lingering, I scan the wrecks of Rome.

One never knew, in those days, which of the centuries one was in, they blended with each other so tolerantly wave after wave of successive sensation. Were the gods to grant, as, alas! they never do, the gift of again traversing some one stage of the journey of life, I for my part should say,

“Give me back that first winter passed in Rome.” I should certainly not repeat the refusal of Cicero in *De Senectute*: “Si quis deus mihi largiatur ut repuerescam, valde recusem!”

Often I went far afield with a man of my own age whose acquaintance I had made on the boat between Genoa and Cività Vecchia, and whose name was Edgcombe. Now and again, but rarely, I went to dances, in apartments hired for the winter by English visitors; but less for dancing, for which I cared but little, than for some more romantic reason, if that epithet be not too strong for such youthful emotions. Ceremonials in the greater Basilicas, in Saint Peter's most of all, attracted me more; music, but of a semi-profane kind, accompanying Mass and Vespers in the greater Basilicas. In Saint Peter's it is no longer to be heard, and in none of the Churches in Rome does it now prevail in its pristine vain-glorious vigour. In former days one heard it to the best advantage, not at Vespers in Saint Peter's, where the fame of the sacred edifice and the vogue of Mustapha attracted crowds of strangers, but in the Basilica of San Giovanni in Laterano on certain appointed afternoons. Then the *Magnificat* was sung in a very delightful manner; for it represented more fully and adequately perhaps than any other pomp or ceremony could do the Church Militant and Triumphant. The words of the magnificent Psalm, “Deposuit potentes de sede” (He hath lowered the Mighty from their seats, and exalted

the humble), were sung to strains of exulting self-complacency by the choir of the Dominus Dominantium. But it was not till every voice in that well-trained choir vociferated in stentorian notes, "Donec ponam inimicos tuos scabellum pedum tuorum," that the highest pitch of vocal victory was reached. How plainly I still can hear across the silence of the intervening years the "scabellum, scabellum," thus proudly reiterated, "pedum tuorum." The combined words and music expressed the innermost thought of the triple dominion of the Papal Caesars, against which neither the Gates of Hell nor the Mighty Ones of the Earth, it is affirmed, shall prevail. It sounded like the defiance of the Church built on a Rock hurled against Transalpine Heretic, Greek or Russian Schismatic, Pseudo-Emperors, upstart Republics, Deist, Atheist, Agnostic, would-be masters or rivals, Bourbon, Hapsburg, or Hohenzollern, whosoever refused to prostrate himself before the lineal successor of Peter, the Holder and Transmitter of the Keys. It sounded and resounded, even like the intoning of the *Te Deum* in Saint Peter's, when all the Splendours of the Vatican mustered and marched in militant procession, after Mentana, into that universal Temple, in 1867.

The Galleries, public and private, I much frequented, being then insensible to the chilly temperature I have since noticed in them; and I think I knew, and carried away with me, a visual

recollection of every statue and picture of note in them all. Late Renaissance architecture, such as exists in Rome, has never been congenial to me, and could not distract me from the fascination I felt in the ruins of Republic and Empire, cherished haunts for the companionship of the *Divina Commedia*. I thus led a full and varied life; producing nothing, but receptive of everything; a student without knowing it. I was not conscious of the education, alike in literature and life, I was passing through. To me it seemed only a time of delightful and self-indulgent leisure. I little knew that *The Human Tragedy*, not to come fully and finally to the birth till more than ten years later, was already germinating, and was waiting only for the simultaneous occurrence of the mighty European events between the years 1866 and 1871 and the much-needed expansion of my own mind. Nor could I then, whatever I hourly felt, have written the Roman section of *The Door of Humility*, not even the closing stanzas :

Build as man may, Time gnaws and peers
Through marble fissures, granite rents;
Only Imagination rears
Imperishable Monuments.

Let Gaul and Goth pollute the shrine,
Level the altar, fire the fane:
There is no razing the Divine;
The Gods return, the Gods remain.

But, as Goethe said, "No youth can be a master," and one was young. Rome, moreover, was the

very place to teach one that lesson. "Silence!" said that awe-inspiring teacher; and I was silent. The man who, at any age, *tries* to write Poetry can have no idea of what Poetry is, its fount, its force, its channel; and I made no attempt to draw water from a Hippocrene that seemingly had run dry.

I do not know that I can give a more accurate or more succinct account of how, for the most part, I passed those, for me, pregnant six months than what I wrote of them, shortly after returning to England, in the shape of "A Roman Reverie."

Rome, 1863.—Lost in a labyrinth of leafage, on the topmost tier of the Flavian Amphitheatre, harbouring no dread lest some Lectius should come and tell me to quit a position in excess of my rank,¹ I am, as far as I can perceive, the only occupant, this Lenten afternoon, of seats that once accommodated eighty-seven thousand spectators, and could still surely leave at their ease one-half that number. *Sedere primo solitus in gradu semper*, which, with permission of the Roman epigrammatist, we will modestly translate—"Accustomed as I am to sit down in whatever row of ruin takes my fancy"—I have to-day selected my seat well up among the plebeians. Indeed, is not this where the *pullati*, or common folk with dirty togas, used to huddle together? though, be it added, whatever Englishmen take or forget to take to Italy, they at least wear a transalpine decency of garb. Yet it is

¹ "Lectius ecce venit, sta, fuge, curre, late!"—MARTIAL.

but a surmise, after all, that I am the only lingerer in this vast and universal theatre, wherein the performance has for centuries been over. No one can perceive me ; of that I feel quite sure. I am hidden by the I know not how many hundred different plants that wind, and bird, and insect have sown there. Nay, even denser covering than that, the undisturbed growth of years, conceals me from observation, and I need no Tyrrhenian sailor from Antium to come and pull the *velarium* over my head against the glow of the Roman sun. But if I am as lost to observation as an owl in an ivy-bush, how can one know but that other eremitically minded pilgrims have not likewise drawn the cowl of the Coliseum over their heads, and are not meditating somewhere in this vast soaring circle of tangled brushwood ? Six acres of ruin are a large allowance for one person ; and what does it matter so long as my brother recluses, if such there be, are equally invisible, and maintain a quiet demeanour in this silent and stupendous solitude ? Much about the same time that Vespasian laid the foundations of his gladiatorial arena, he projected an equally imposing edifice as a Temple of Peace. It soon disappeared under the waves of a warlike time. But those human combats have long subsided, and the Flavian Amphitheatre itself is now the real *Templum Pacis*.

I fear I have been imitating Vespasian in a small way ; for was he not transferred from Rome to the East by Nero, for having fallen asleep during the

reading of one of the poems of that sensitive author? and I must own to having had a siesta in the afternoon sunshine-shadow of my comfortable seclusion, though Dante's page lies open before me. I had read five cantos of the *Purgatorio* before the exposition of sleep came over me, and I nodded at the lines :

O frate mio, ciascuna è cittadina
D' una vera città ; ma tu vuoi dire
Che vivesse in Italia peregrina.

When Rome has once been reached, one feels like a pilgrim who has got to the end of his journey, and is in no hurry to take the backward road. More than ever, when the Forty Days of Lent have come, does one recognise the special fitness of the Eternal City as a penitential abode. Even Cardinals have had ashes laid upon their foreheads, and been reminded that they too are but dust. *Memento, homo, quia pulvis es, et in pulverem reverteris.* Who is likely to forget that — in Rome? The Apollo, the Argentina, the Valle theatres, and even the Capranica with its *Fantoccini*, are closed. There are placards at the street-corners, bearing the signature of the Cardinal-Vicar, forbidding *ristoratori* to serve their customers with flesh-meat on abstinence days, unless they do so in private apartments, that all the world may see Rome is the capital of the Christian World. If they transgress, sharp penalty awaits them. Prayers and church ceremonies are more frequent than ever ; but the organ everywhere is silent. No native Romans entertain during Lent ;

only the more irreverent strangers do so. The bulk of these last departed as soon as the final Carnival *confetti* were thrown, and the last *moccolo* extinguished, for Naples, for Sicily, for Florence, and will not be back before Holy Week, or perhaps not till the Church fills the air with jubilant music, chants Alleluias, and exclaims *Resurrexit sicut dixit*. Meanwhile, the few who have remained have the walls of Honorius or the knoll of Antemnae wholly to themselves. When the beautiful but sometimes depressing desolation of the City itself waxes too heavy to bear, why not resort to the saddle, and try to out-gallop the untiring stride of the Claudian Aqueduct? The untilled ground has broken into spontaneous flowers. You canter over violets, anemones, and asphodels. Clouds are there none, but the Alban hills make their own soft shadows. To the tinkle of sheep-bells and the melodious trills of mounting skylarks, you ride towards, but seem to get no nearer to, Tivoli, snugly nested in a dimple of the Sabine Hills. How far one has to go, to get beyond the blight of sadness radiated by Rome across the Campagna! The fig-tree flourishes in the soil where Frascati preserves the traditions of philosophic Tusculum. What woods are more umbrageous than those of Lariccia, what vineyards better tilled than those of Monte Giove, what olives strike deeper into the rich brown clods than those that slope down towards Porto d' Anzio? It would be right pleasant to make for these, but if you are to be back in Rome by

nightfall you must turn your horse's head and ride straight for the arches of the Acqua Felice. What a sundown! What a twilight! Is that verily a city, or only a mirage of the imagination? The bells of Ave Maria testify to reality. Shoals of young priests are hurrying homeward. Rome is older by one day more.

This afternoon, however, I am too lazy to quit my curving arbour, in which botanists tell us upward of four hundred different plants find ample foothold. It must be these that make the air smell so sweet; here where, in the days of Domitian, fountains used to fling scented sprays of extract of saffron and crimson wine. What a barbarous refinement! A worthy accompaniment, truly, to the slaughter, at one sitting, of nine thousand beasts. What would Cicero have said to such a sacrifice, he who several years previously, and before the Flavian Amphitheatre had yet risen from the ground, asked indignantly, "*Quae potest homini esse polito delectatio, quum aut homo imbecillis a violentissima bestia laniatur, aut praeclara bestia venabulo transverberatur?*"

Are the eighty-seven thousand spectators hurrying to that spectacle once more? I hear the sound of human voices swelling hitherward; and, as I peep through the leafy loopholes of my ruinous retreat, I descry a long procession of human figures slowly and sinuously pouring into the arena. But it is headed neither by Flamen nor by Lictor; and where the fasces and the eagle would once have towered,

I discern a more humble and more sacred emblem. The pace of the procession is slow and solemn, not impulsive nor triumphant, as it defiles from underneath the arches where the imperial athlete once was hailed with servile acclamations. What are they chanting? No hymn of triumph surely. Rather may it be the lines of Luigi Biondi,

Santa religion! gli aspri costumi
Tu raddolcisti, e fai stille di pianto
• Versar dove correan di sangue fiumi,

so appropriate to the scene and the hour.

It seems strange that not till the middle of the eighteenth century did it occur to any of the successors of Peter to rescue from the desecration of indifference a spot saturated, one may say without hyperbole, with the blood of the martyrs. Everybody knows that earthquake, fire, and inundation competed with each other for its destruction. Guiscard's troopers stalled themselves there, and the Frangipani transformed it into a fortress. When less turbulent times supervened, it became by tacit consent the common quarry of the more powerful Roman Houses. When, for a time friendly enough with each other, they held tilt and tourney within it, and then Mystery-Plays restored for a time its theatrical character. Sixtus V. had a scheme for turning it into a woollen manufactory, and another Prince of Peace thought it would serve capitally as a powder magazine. Meanwhile it remained a convenient market-place for the sale of vegetables.

But in 1750 an earnest Ligurian monk, Leonardo da Porto Maurizio, came to Rome, craved audience of Benedict XIV., and, obtaining Papal sanction for the new form of devotion known as the Via Crucis, induced the Sovereign Pontiff to consecrate the Coliseum, to celebrate Mass there, and to erect a large wooden cross in the very centre of the Pagan arena. Ever since, the Stations of the Cross, commemorating the journey to Calvary, have encircled the vast ellipse, and the new-comers, whose rising voices disturbed my reverie, are wandering hither behind a tall, bare-footed, bare-headed Franciscan friar, to make the dolorous pilgrimage.

All the fine ladies of Rome are there, and, heedless of delicate flounce and furbelow, they kneel on the unswept ground at every halt made by the rosary-girdled monk, and bow their heads in audible lamentation. Then, when the long sad service is completed, he rebukes them for their transgressions, and invites them to a holier life. That much I can make out from where I sit, in sympathetic contemplation of the scene, though no small part of his exhortation reaches me but in fitful vowel sounds, musical, but somewhat vague in meaning. Before they have come to a close, a blare of trumpets tells that a body of French Zouaves are coming along the Via San Gregorio, between the Palatine and the Caelian Hills, on their way back to barracks from the exercising ground that lies beyond the tomb of Caius Cestius and Shelley's burial-place. As I wrote at the time, in some verses evoked by visiting his tomb:

AT SHELLEY'S GRAVE

1863

Beneath this marble, mute of praise,
Is hushed the heart of One
Who, whilst it beat, had eagle's gaze
To stare upon the sun.
Equal in flight
To any height,
He lies where they that crawl but come,
Sleeping most sound,—*Cor Cordium*.

No rippling notes announcing spring,
No bloom-evoking breeze,
No fleecy clouds that earnest bring
Of summer on the seas,
Avail to wake
The heart whose ache
Was to be tender overmuch
To Nature's every tone and touch.

The insolence of stranger drum,
Vexing the broad blue air,
To smite a nation's clamour dumb,
Or spur a rash despair,
Which once had wrung
That prophet tongue
To challenge force or cheer the slave,
Rolls unrebuked around his grave.

The cruel clarion's senseless bray,
The lamb's half-human bleat,
Patter of shower on sward or spray,
Or clang of mailed feet,
Are weak alike
To stir or strike
The once swift voice that now is dumb
To war's reveil, cicala's hum.

Oh wake, dead heart ! come back ! indeed

Come back ! Thy thunderous brow
And levin-shafts the world did need

Never so much as now.

The chain, the rack,

The hopes kept back

By those whom serfs are forced to trust,
Might well reanimate thy dust.

Nay, Poet, rest thou quiet there,

'Neath sunshine, wind, and rain ;

At least if thou canst scarce repair,

Thou dost not share our pain.

It is enough

That cold rebuff

And calumny of knave and dunce

Did vex thy tender spirit once.

Where was the marvel, though thy corse

Submitted to the pyre,

Thy heart of hearts should foil the force

Of the sea-wind-blown fire ?

It was but just

That what was dust

Should own the cradle whence it came—

But when did flame e'er fed on flame ?

Or rather say the sacred torch,

The while it did illumine

Thy heart, did also so far scorch,

Was nought left to consume.

That ardent zeal

For human weal

Had searched and parched it o'er and o'er

Till, lava-like, 'twould burn no more.

I snatch the banner from thy grave,

I wave the torch on high ;

'Spite smiling tyrant, crouching slave,

The Cause shall never die !

Sceptre and cowl

May smite or scowl,

Serfs hug the chains they half deserve—

Right cannot miss, howe'er it swerve !

Alas ! you failed, who were so strong :
Shall I succeed, so weak ?
Life grows still shorter, art more long ;
You sang—I scarce can speak.
Promethean fire
Within your lyre
Made manly words with music mate,
Whilst I am scarce articulate.

He sang too early to be heard ;
The world is drowsy still ;
And only those whose sleep is stirred
By sun that streaks the hill,
Or the first notes
Of matin throats,
Have heard his strain 'mid hush of night,
And known it harbinger of Light.

But when the Day shall come whose dawn
He early did forbode,
When men by Knowledge shall be drawn,
Not driven by the goad,
This spot apart,
Where sleeps his heart,
Deaf to all clamour, wrong, or rage,
Shall be their choicest pilgrimage.

How distinctly I remember my first pilgrimage to the grave in the English Cemetery, where one looks for the words *Cor Cordium*. They were scarcely to be deciphered ; for Shelley-worship, in later years perhaps carried somewhat too far, had not then yet become the fashion. The tomb was lichen-covered and grass-invaded ; and, scandalised at the sight, I wrote an anonymous regretful letter to some English daily paper, to which of them I do not remember. Weeks passed on. I went again to the grave, and, as I had first found it, such it still

remained. Not without some hesitation I had it reverently cleaned, and relieved of the weeds that trespassed on it; and then, carrying my temerity still further, I planted pansies and violets round it, and, before leaving Rome some months later, left with the *custode* of the Cemetery a trifling sum for keeping the spot neat and flower-girt.

A good many years after, in 1875, I received a letter from Lady Shelley, when she had at last discovered, from a friend of mine, who it was that had done the pious work, owing to my friend having sent her a Poem of mine.

BOSCOMBE MANOR,
BOURNEMOUTH, HANTS,
Dec. 8th, 1875.

DEAR —

. . . Both Bessy and myself are very much charmed with Mr. Austin's poem. I have cut it out and put it in the cabinet with all our most precious relics. Whatever the intentions of the pirates might be they have not after all carried into execution. The collision no doubt caused the catastrophe, but the storm alone might have done it—death evidently was instantaneous, and Nature did snatch him away from murderous hands perhaps.

I hope some day we may have the pleasure of knowing Mr. Austin. Should you see him, will you say to him from us how delighted we were with his poem?

With love from all here, very affectionately yours,

J. SHELLEY.

The following is the Poem my friend had sent to Lady Shelley:—

SHELLEY'S DEATH

[“A little while ago, there died at Spezzia an old sailor, who in his last confession to the priest (whom he told to make it public) stated that he was one of the crew that ran down the boat containing Shelley and Williams, which was done under the impression that the rich Milord Byron was on board with lots of money. They did not intend to sink the boat, but to board her and murder Byron.”—*Letter to Mr. Trelawny from his Daughter, published in “The Times” of Wednesday, December 1, 1875.*]

What! And it *was* so! Thou wert then
 • Death-stricken from behind,
 O heart of hearts! and they were men,
 That rent thee from mankind!
 Greedy hatred chasing love,
 As a hawk pursues a dove,
 Till the soft feathers float upon the careless wind.

Loathed life! that I might break the chain
 Which links my kind with me,
 To think that human hands for gain
 Should have been turned 'gainst *thee*,—
 Thee that wouldst have given thine all
 For the poor, the sick, the thrall,
 And weighed thyself as dross, 'gainst their felicity!

We deemed that Nature, jealous grown,
 Withdrew the glimpse she gave,
 In thy bright genius, of her own,
 And, not to slay, but save,
 That she timely took back thus
 What had been but lent to us,
 Shrouding thee in her winds, and lulling 'neath her wave.

For it seemed meet thou shouldst not long
 Toss on life's fitful billow,
 Nor sleep 'mid mounds of silenced wrong
 Under the clay-cold willow:
 Rather that thou shouldst recline
 Amid waters crystalline,
 The sea-shells at thy feet, and sea-weed for thy pillow.

We felt we had no right to keep
What never had been ours ;
That thou belongedst to the deep,
And the uncounted hours ;
That thou earthly no more wert
Than the rainbow's melting skirt,
The sunset's fading bloom, and midnight's shooting showers.

And, thus resigned, our empty hands
Surrendered thee to thine,
Thinking thee drawn by kindred bands
Under the swirling brine,
Playing there on new-strung shell,
Tuned to Ocean's mystic swell,
Thy lyrical complaints and rhapsodies divine.

But now to hear no sea-nymph fair
Submerged thee with her smile,
And tempests were content to spare
Thee to us yet awhile,
But for ghouls in human mould
Ravaging the seas for gold,—
Oh ! this blots out the heavens, and makes mere living vile !

Yet thy brief life presaged such death,
And it was meet that they
Who poisoned, should have quenched, thy breath,
Who slandered thee, should slay ;
That thy spirit, long the mark
Of the dagger drawn in dark,
Should by the ruffian's stroke be ravished from the day.

Hush ! From the grave where I so oft
Have stood, 'mid ruined Rome,
I seem to hear a whisper soft
Wafted across the foam ;
Bidding justest wrath be still,
Good feel lovingly for ill,
As exiles for rough paths that help them to their home.

BOSCOMBE MANOR,
BOURNEMOUTH, HANTS,
December 14th.

I trust, dear sir, that you will forgive me for addressing you although personally unknown to you. For years my husband and myself have owed you a deep debt of gratitude, and I cannot tell you how happy and thankful we are to know at last the name of him whom we have blest and thanked in our hearts all this time. Having heard in /63 that Shelley's grave was in a neglected state, we made a pilgrimage to Rome for the purpose of rectifying this. On our arrival we found it in perfect order and looking lovely, with roses and violets blooming round it. We were told by the *custode* that it had only just been done by the orders of a young gentleman who had visited it with two ladies. We tried in every way to find out who had done this work of love, but all in vain. I wrote a letter which I left in the hands of the *custode*, begging that we might at least know the name of one to whom we must ever feel so deeply thankful. And to-day for the first time, through our friend Mrs. —, we have learnt it.

We have one more wish now—to clasp your hand and thank you face to face. I trust that the time when we may do so is not very distant. I feel how lame and poor all I can say is, but I am sure you will feel and know all that I have expressed so badly.—Yours ever truly and gratefully,

J. SHELLEY.

My friend then asked me to meet her and Sir Percy at dinner. I took down Lady Shelley, whom, with Sir Percy, the poet's son, I saw for the first time; and, in the course of conversation, she told me how, once upon a time, she had read an anonymous letter lamenting that Shelley's grave was utterly neglected; how she and her husband travelled to Rome as soon as they conveniently could, expressly to repair the neglect;

how they had found his resting-place cared for and embellished ; and how on asking the *custode* who it was that had seen to it, he said, “Un certo giovane Inglese, di cui non mi rammento il nome” (A certain young Englishman whose name he did not remember). The “certo giovane Inglese,” I said, “was—well, he who has the pleasure of talking with you now.” She then added that she had written a memorandum of the visit, and would send it me. It runs thus, and was left with the *custode* :

For the last two or three years Shelley's son and myself have been anxiously hoping to visit Rome for the purpose of restoring the tomb so precious and sacred to us. When at last we arrived, no words can express the feelings of deep love and gratitude we experienced towards the generous stranger who has taught us in so eloquent a manner that Shelley's memory is precious not only to us, but to the world. We have in vain tried to discover to whom we are so largely indebted. But should this ever reach you, dear stranger, will you not add to your kindness in letting Shelley's children know by what name they may bless you ?

JANE SHELLEY.

ROME, *April* 1863.

BOSCOMBE MANOR,
BOURNEMOUTH, HANTS,
Dec. 18th, 1875.

DEAR MR. AUSTIN—I have to thank you for your most kind and valued letter, and also for a precious little volume which reached me by this morning's post, and which contains a poem, *At Shelley's Grave*, written on the spot so sacred to us. I send you in return a copy of the Memorials which I daresay you may have already seen, but it will greatly gratify me if you will do me the honour of accepting it from my hands.

With many heartfelt thanks, and in hopes of seeing you before very long, believe me, very sincerely yours,

J. SHELLEY.

CHAPTER VI

Ride to the Castelli Romani—Visit to Naples—Vesuvius, Sorrento, Capri—Departure from Rome—By Vetturino to Florence—Return to Hailey Lodge.

THEY who know intramural Rome alone, or for a few miles beyond, have but an imperfect acquaintance with the Rome of history and literature, the Rome of Livy, Virgil, and Horace. In order to extend their knowledge, they must be much in the saddle, and be tolerably good horsemen.

One fair afternoon in March, as free from all suspicion of east wind as the road was from motor-cars and lamp-posts, I passed through the Porta San Giovanni on horseback, with a male companion, proceeding at first at a foot's pace along the Via Asinaria.

There were wine-carts coming into the city, with a shaggy Pomeranian dog on the topmost cask. There was a Cardinal's carriage solemnly driving outward to take his Eminence a *piccola passeggiata*, and to give him that opportunity of stretching his legs which ecclesiastical etiquette then forbade him to do in the City, save on the Pincio. There was a white *osteria* on the left with

a Bacchanalian bush hung outside, advertising, despite the proverb, the excellence of the wine within. Outside its threshold was a team of sleek draught oxen, waiting patiently, as they would wait till the crack of doom, for their convivial driver, who was refreshing himself within. There were tall canes on each side of the road in which buffaloes might hide, as they hide farther afield, in the Pontine Marshes. There was a straight dusty road, a bit of broken aqueduct visible ahead, and a dome of blue above us. My companion had a fine appreciation of golden silence, and neither of us had any thought in the world beyond that of surrendering ourselves to the delight of such surroundings. I think we must have got beyond the Porta Furba, where the Marcian and Claudian Aqueducts meet, and close to the tumulus known as the Monte del Grano, to which certain authorities unauthentically point as the tomb of Alexander Severus, but to which we are certainly indebted for the famous Portland Vase, before either of us made an observation. At that point an uncontrollable wish seized me not to return to Rome that night. My companion in the most obliging manner in the world declared that he cherished precisely the same wish. Should we push on, he asked, and sleep at Frascati? He is a poor traveller who does not rise superior, on an emergency, to the supposed necessity of having a "change," and we never hesitated in our sudden determination. It was the vernal equinox, and

we were well content to reach Frascati by sundown. We were already passing the sign of the Osteria di Mezza Via, or half-way house, and it was only yet a quarter past four. The whole distance from Rome is about a dozen miles, and but six therefore were yet ahead of us. Presently we passed the stone-pines, shaggy landmarks that mark the farmstead of Torre Nuova; and before very long we began the ascent to Frascati. We had both been in Rome since the beginning of December, but never yet had we seemed to ride into a genuine territory of man's cultivation. But here the Campagna seemed to retire from us, and we were awhile almost shut in by vineyards, now getting their first bright greenery, and thriving olive orchards, dotted with occasional habitations actually not made out of ruins nor hollowed out of tombs. We had ridden rather hard the last three miles, but we slackened pace here, and let our steeds walk leisurely up the pleasant, fresh-smelling ascent, feeling how sweet it was for once to exchange the savage crook of the shepherd for the plough and furrow of the husbandman. Thus we reached Frascati as the Ave Maria bells began to peal in the square where stands the cathedral, flanked by the Albergo di Londra. We stabled our horses, saw our double-bedded sleeping chamber, ordered dinner, and then just had time, before sitting down to it, to gaze across the melancholy but beautiful Campagna we had traversed, before the mantle of night was thrown

across it. Even then the dome of St. Peter's towered significantly clear in the upper twilight, asserting itself above lower darkness.

The dinner of the Londra was not all our expectations had painted it; and had it not been for an incursion of Papal Zouaves, some of whom we had met in Rome, and with the rest of whom we were very quickly made acquainted, we might possibly have repented us of the hasty resolution taken in the afternoon. But we now were a goodly company, and these defenders of the Pope, mostly French and Irish, made the night less long with their happy laughter, and the fumes of the *baiocco-e-mezzo* cigars which his Holiness used to dispense at the Palazzo Mignanelli in the days before "Cavours" were smoked in the Sacred City. Discipline, however, exacted that our companions should leave us early; and, with the intention of paying a visit the next morning to Tusculum, we composed ourselves to sleep. The clangour of the six o'clock Angelus bells woke us betimes, and before a couple of hours had gone we were bestriding donkeys, and in this truly philosophical attitude went on our way to the scene of Cicero's Tusculan Questions, the birthplace of Cato, and the dim traces of a city that successfully resisted Hannibal, and which as late as the twelfth century, under the command of its titular count, assisted by a Ghibelline army under the Archbishop of Cologne and Mayence, inflicted such a defeat on the Romans that contemporary chroniclers speak

of the engagement as the Cannae of the middle ages, and Machiavelli declares that Rome never recovered from it, nor was ever again thriving or populous. When the vanquished craved permission to bury their dead, the answer was, "Yes! but count them first." Twenty-four years later Rome had its revenge. In 1191 the Romans obtained possession of Tusculum, and sowed it with salt. There has been no Tusculum since, save ruins which barely rise above the ground, or push themselves through long grass. But what a view! Who could potter among bits of pavement, or pry into the distinctions of baked earth which help to assign the precise century of this or that lump of masonry, whilst the eye could rest upon the whole of classic Latium? There lay the sites of Gabii and Collatia, and, beyond these, yet farther north, Tivoli, Montecelli, Soracte, and all the Sabine Apennines. To the east were the Volscian Mountains, with Monte Pila, Rocca di Papa, Hannibal's Camp, Alba Longa, and the more modern Castel Gondolfo and Marino, full in view. It was whilst looking upon this extensive scene of supreme beauty and surpassing interest that a fresh temptation invaded us. Why go back to Rome to-day, to-morrow, or even the day after? The early Roman spring, when auspicious, is the most delightful season of the year; and we resolved to saunter over hill and plain in the saddle for as long as fancy moved us. The question, "What will Jarrett think?"

was answered by the conclusive rejoinder that Jarrett might go to the Stygian Pool, and that a little change of scene and food at our expense would do his horses all the good in the world. Nor was the somewhat more weighty matter, a "change of things," without a solution. One does not pass through a Roman winter without forming familiar acquaintances; and we remembered that a party of these were to be at Tivoli on the morrow for a day and a night. Between Frascati and Rome there already existed a railway, the only one beside that between Rome and Cività Vecchia in the dominions of his Holiness; and we should be able to send a message thereby to our friends to bring what we needed to Tivoli. So resolved, we turned away, not without such regret as one always feels in quitting sacred ground, from philosophical Tusculum, bestrode our donkeys, and made for Frascati once more. One of the most beautiful of shepherd lads, whose eyes would have resembled burning coals, could coals retain their blackness when they burn, and whose long ebon hair hung from under a hat like Mercury's in long careless curls over his young shoulders, came slowly down one of the enclosed pastures, where, with crook twice as long as himself, he was tending his flock in solitude, and opened for us a gate before our guide could anticipate him. I dropped a five *baiocco* piece into his palm. He had been singing to his sheep a homely roundelay of the hills. When he looked

upon the coin he gave me gracious thanks, but, alas ! he sang no more. Whereupon I rode along, inly meditating a Tusculan question of very old import.

The rest of the morning was spent in a desultory visit to the Villa Aldobrandini, better known as the Villa Belvidere, Giacomo della Porta's last work, which had to be completed by Fontana. We troubled ourselves little about the Cavaliere d'Arpino's frescoes in the Casino, though it is generally understood that one is bound to admire them ; and if I were put through a competitive examination as to the villa and its grounds, I could only say that I found the latter surpassingly lovely, and that we spent in them three exquisitely lazy hours. But as the day wore on it must be confessed that my companion, like myself, was carnal enough to remember the exceedingly sorry fare of our Frascati *osteria*, to the prospect of a renewal of which not even a repetition of the joviality of Pio Nono's Zouaves could reconcile us. At parting with them last night we had sworn by all our gods to make another evening of it ; but we were as false as dicers' oaths, and crept away to Albano before once again the sun sank over the Campagna, and sat down to a capital little supper at the Albergo della Posta.

The sun was just rising when we got into the saddle the next morning ; and at the by no means early hour for Italy of six o'clock we were riding back to the Arician Viaduct. Our bourne was Lake Nemi, then Lake Albano, and finally Monte

Cavo. But we could not resist turning aside to get no matter how passing a look at the Pope's country villa at Castel Gondolfo, though we had been told it was not worth a visit. My companion shared my curiosity; so, entering its courtyard unchallenged, dismounting, and fastening our bridles to iron rings, of which there was abundant choice, we walked straight through the first open door we came to. There was nothing to tell us that the place was inhabited, and the architecture manifested none of that splendour which most people associate with Papal dwellings. There was plenty of masonry, as there always is in Italy; and to English eyes no Italian villa can ever look diminutive. Castel Gondolfo—meaning thereby not the cluster of houses forming the village of that name, but the Pope's summer palace—is of goodly proportions, but in every way unpretending; and we at first thought we must have made some mistake. Presently, however, a domestic wearing a certain self-evident air of the sacristy, attracted by the sound of our footsteps in the long, empty, echoing corridor, made his appearance, and greeted us with the customary urbanity of his race. Was this the summer residence of Pius IX., the spot where he usually spent his *villeggiatura*? “Sicuro,” was the answer. Yes; it was so. Might we see it? Certainly, if we wished; though, he added, there was really nothing to see. But the Pope's apartments? Yes; that was all that anybody could even pretend there was to see, and he would

show us them. "Faccino loro comodo!" a round-about but extremely polite way of informing us that we were to put on our hats, for we might find the corridors cold, coming out of the sun as we had done, and were to make ourselves generally at home. He was quite right; there was nothing to see, at least by the external eye. It was the absence of anything to see that was so suggestive. No poor parish priest could have humbler rooms than these, which formed the residence for four months in the year of a man who was then a King as well as a Pope, and whose spiritual subjects still form, after the Chinese, the most populous empire in the world. A bed, a chair, a *prie-Dieu*, a crucifix, and a shabby bit of carpet,—behold the furniture and apparatus of the Pope's bedroom at Castel Gondolfo. Here was Republican simplicity for you in the Monarch who clings to Divine Right more than all other Sovereigns! It may be doubted, however, if people really like Republican simplicity. It is a standing reproach to themselves, and the Caesars of this world act sagaciously, perhaps, in making as much of their purple as possible. The world is largely governed by tailors and upholsterers.

As we rode out of the courtyard I suggested we should dash forward to Monte Giove, a short distance on the road to Porto d'Anzio. Why? asked my companion. My reply was that the situation seemed inviting, and that there once stood famous Corioli, where Coriolanus fluttered the Volscians. "You're wrong there, I suspect," he

retorted, "though probably you can adduce quite an army of antiquaries in support of the theory. But remember what Pliny says, that 'the city had not only perished but had left no trace'"; and he quoted Pliny's exact words, now no longer in my mind. "And, what is more, remember that we must sleep somewhere to-night, and that we have much to see without going out of our way to imaginary sites." This was unanswerable, and we trotted on towards Nemi. What a fairy-like yet uncanny-looking lake! That Caesar should have thought of building a handsome villa above it I can readily understand; and that, after a considerable outlay, he should have pulled down again what had been erected, is equally conceivable. For it is not a spot to live at. The wandering Childe Harold hit off its peculiarity with much precision. It does look as if its cold settled aspect cherished hate, and verily it sleeps like a snake, coiled round into itself. If one could only get over this feeling, the summit of the wooded crater, whose watery bottom it is, would make a charming residence, and there are few feudal castles that have a finer site than that of the Colonna in the little village of Nemi. One should see the Alban Lake first, and that of Nemi afterwards, for Nemi is far the more beautiful of the two. Indeed, Lake Albano owes everything to association, which archaeologists have done their best to destroy with their dreary dryasdust disquisitions and disputations concerning its *Emissarium*. As in duty

bound, we dismounted to see this wonderful historic outlet ; but beyond the smell of smoky candles I remember nothing save, it need scarcely be said, the more than usually oracular character of the response from Delphi concerning it and the Siege of Veii, two things which were connected in much the same way as Tenterden Steeple and the Goodwin Sands. Perhaps one should not speak with levity of so celebrated a spot ; but, unfortunately, celebrated spots have guides and ciceroni, who grate upon the nerves with their unending loquaciousness, their stories got by rote, their strange jumble of true and false, and cheap finery of erudition. It was a pleasant relief to see the tranquil Franciscan monks sunning themselves outside their monastery at Palazzuola, and not caring one *baiocco* piece about all the antiquities in the world. There is a consular tomb in the garden of their monastery about which there has been no end of learned wrangling. The good friars neither knew nor cared anything about it, and, when interrogated on the subject, observed that it was “*un sepolcro dei tempi antichi.*” That was quite enough for them ; and what is the use of bothering yourself when there are so many such, and you tread upon the dust of Etruscan or Latin heroes at every step ? There is a good deal to be said for this view. A little knowledge is said to be a dangerous thing, but it is not dangerous to the imagination. Knowledge is to the imagination what fuel is to flame. A little feeds it ; a great

deal extinguishes it. Not that one's bare-footed friends in their brown serge habits, girdled with huge rosaries, possessed either that which feeds or that which extinguishes. They and their predecessors had gazed out from their vantage-ground for many centuries over the Alban Lake, and across it to the Campagna, ending in one direction at Rome, in the other with the Mediterranean. They go a-begging round Italy, and then they come back, and pray, and contemplate. A wonderful thing that contemplation! Like the Roman Catholic Religious Orders themselves, it divides itself into two categories. There is active contemplation and contemplative contemplation. The latter is deemed the higher since the less remunerative occupation, and approaches nearest to the Oriental *Nirvana* or annihilation. The Franciscans of Palazzuola were very gracious, and offered us bread and wine. But we wanted neither, and left them to their—contemplations.

I doubt if there be anything in the world, if scenery and association be taken together, more beautiful than the ride by the shores of the Alban Lake, at Palazzuola, to Monte Cavo, the more so if one prolongs the brief journey by going round through Rocca di Papa. No minuteness of description, nowadays so much in fashion, no accumulation of details, however faithfully rendered, can do justice to a succession of prospects abounding not only in natural loveliness, but in centuries of story. There are woods as leafy and

as sweet, no doubt, as the groves, all of them once sacred to Diana, that stretch behind Palazzuola; there are elevations as cool and commanding as that of Rocca di Papa, for it is only 2500 feet above the sea; there are hollows as smooth and undulating, in all likelihood, as Hannibal's Camp; there are views, though not many, as extensive as that obtained from the wall of the garden of Monte Cavo's Monastery. But at the foot of the leafy mountain we had just ascended there lay the lakes of Nemi and Albano, and the villages of Albano, Lariccia, Castel Gondolfo, and Genzano. Beyond was the great plain of Latium, the scene of one half of a great epic poem. It was all spread out before me as on a map of less than an inch to a mile, but league for league, *tale quale*, as the Italians say, precisely just as Aeneas saw it, and Turnus, and their poet-historian. Monte Artemisio thrusts up an untimely shoulder to hide the Pontine Marshes; but you can follow the whole classic sea-line from Antium to modern Civit  Vecchia, along a darkly wooded coast of sixty miles. Lavinium, Ardea, Ostia, Caere, Laurentum, there they all are, or were, the shadows of great names. The Sabine Hills, forming themselves into the neatest of natural amphitheatres, hem in Tusculum, Tibur, and Gabii. There soars Soracte; there stands *gelidus Algidus*.

It is not often one is repaid for climbing, but nothing save foul weather can disappoint the wayfarer who ascends Monte Cavo. And is it nothing to ascend a Hill of Triumph, even if secondary,

but only secondary, to that of the Capitol, and which was once trodden by the great Caesar himself? Once there arose upon this very spot the Temple of Jupiter Latialis; and its ruins survived till nearly the date of the French Revolution, when Cardinal York, the brother of Prince Charlie, appropriated them, and rebuilt with them the Church of the Passionist Monastery that dispossessed Jove. The day was favourable to our desires, and we gazed long and silently upon the matchless panorama. The sun shone brightly and even hotly, though in passing through Rocca di Papa we had to dismount and lead our horses, owing to the slippery condition of the steep ascent, caused by a sharp night's frost. Between Rocca di Papa and Monte Cavo, and also beyond Hannibal's Camp, the woods were full of snowdrops, the largest and whitest I ever saw, though the chestnut woods were in places fast coming into leaf.

Our business was now to descend to Albano by a different and shorter route, and thence make the best of our way, after luncheon, back to Frascati. Our path lay through woodlands, which we determined to penetrate, if only because a celebrated instructor says no one ought to do so unaccompanied by a guide. The Prior of the Monastery of Monte Cavo sent a lay brother with us for a portion of the way; but, partly on account of our extreme confidence, and partly because he did not much relish having to climb the hill again, he soon agreed with us that it was quite impossible for us

to go wrong, and bade us farewell. For a time we seemed to prosper. By degrees, however, the path, though it became broader, grew more rugged, and by and by assumed the aspect of a dried-up torrent. Finally it ceased to have any aspect at all, and was neither track nor empty stream, and we were in the middle of a wood of seemingly interminable extent. The obstinacy of Englishmen is proverbial; and therefore I need scarcely say we did not turn back. We had to dismount and lead our horses; and shortly this simple operation was exchanged for the far more difficult and intricate one of forcing a way for them and ourselves. But they were docile and long-suffering; and, after a monotonous but exciting fight with nature for about an hour and a half, we found ourselves once more in the open. We had had to push our way through the brushwood where it was least dense, and in the end all notion of direction had been abandoned for the one consuming idea of "getting out of this."

We were now at a considerable elevation, and on a sort of scrubby moorland, with ground rising on our left. We believed this to be Algidus, and were right in the surmise. Albano was nowhere in sight, or any town or village. There were no habitations, no human forms to be seen, even no sheep. But it was very beautiful, and we did not complain. Our only lament was that our flasks were empty, for we had counted upon being at Albano long before this. Path was

there none; but there was a mountain torrent bed, and this time a real not a sham one, but quite empty of water. It had the natural advantage of leading downward, so we trusted ourselves to it. For an hour this was our high-road, and I can only attribute it to their sound Roman legs, and careful handling, that neither of our horses came to grief. At the end of that time my companion exclaimed there was a town in sight. And there was, but it was not Albano, nor any town that either of us had seen before. But ahead of us were sheep, and by and by there was a shepherd. The town was Velletri, about seven miles away. Such was the information he gave us. We laughed, as well we might, for we were altogether out in our bearings. We could see the high-road plainly enough which leads from Albano to Velletri, and thence to Naples and Capua; part, in fact, of the famous Via Appia. But the shepherd told us we could not hit the road with any certainty, save at a place about a mile this side of Velletri; and it was clear enough that, if we attempted to join it at any point nearer to Albano, we should only expose ourselves to a repetition of the experience from which we had but recently, and so thankfully, emerged. There was nothing for it, therefore, but to push on to Velletri, bait there, then return to Albano by the high-road, make no more plans, but leave our future saddle-journeying through Latium to the benignant chapter of accidents.

I have been in Rome many times since;

once from the end of November till the middle of April, on another occasion from the end of November till the end of February, and oftener than it is worth counting for several successive weeks. But whether one is there for a long or for a briefer period, leaving it still feels like leaving the Capital to which all roads lead. I hope I have not lingered over long in the recital of what it first did for me. I have omitted much on which memory has always looked back with gratefulness; visits to Subiaco and Palestrina, then communicating with each other only by a bridle-path through magnificent hills and under crag-perched villages; Easter Day, as it once was; Saint Peter's, both within and without, with its long procession of Bishops, Archbishops, Abbots, Cardinals, and Swiss Guards, followed by the Pope carried high on the shoulders of men in the *Sedia Gestatoria*; the 20,000 worshippers of all ranks at the Pontifical High Mass; the silver trumpets in the Dome, and the papal blessing to the City and the World from the open-air balcony; the illumination of its exterior at night by thousands of little oil-fed lamps, together with the soaring rockets on Monte Pincio at the other end of the city, so different from ordinary pyrotechnical displays elsewhere; all combining to bequeath the recollection of something more impressive and more imperial and cosmopolitan than any spectacles I have seen since—the Baptism of the Prince Imperial, the Battlefield of Sedan, the smoking ruins of Paris at the end of the Commune,

the defiling of the German Army before the first German Emperor down the Unter den Linden, the Military Review over the plain of Spandau by the Three Emperors, and the two Jubilees of our late beloved Queen. I do not say that such would have been the impression of others. I am speaking only of my own, during that first winter in Rome, and of scenes and ceremonials that, when the time was ripe, were reproduced in *The Human Tragedy*.

But even Rome is far from being synonymous with Italy; and my six months there had only inflamed the desire to see more of what to any cultured mind must ever be the ancestral Past. So, in the company of three pleasant friends, all older than myself, whose acquaintance I had made in the course of the winter, I went to Naples, and, after a superficial seeing of it, supplemented by longer and more searching visits in later years, rode up Vesuvius on a rough but ready pony as far as the Observatory, and then went afoot to the mouth of the crater, racing some young French ecclesiastical students, and beating them by twenty minutes; spent a long and wonder-awakening day in Pompeii; consumed ripe oranges in the groves of Sorrento; passed twenty-four hours at Amalfi, where Boniface VIII. said that, because he had loved truth and hated iniquity, therefore he died in a foreign land; drove to the Doric temples at Paestum, then standing sublimely alone amid ripe asphodels by the Tyrrhene Sea; was rowed at four

o'clock in the morning to Capri, the oarsmen singing,

Fin' al fin de' giorni miei
Io te sola voglio amar,

and then bursting out into the less romantic exclamation, "Maccheroni a Capri!" slept two nights at the little inn, then the only one in the Island, "Quì si sana"; leaned over the rock of Tiberius, and saw the peasant-girl descendants of gods and goddesses zigzagging down the famous steps with bare brown limbs, carrying faggots or water-pitchers on their well-poised heads rising from columnar throats, their features faultlessly classical, their lips curved and full, the abundance of their waving hair shining like the wings of the raven, and their dark eyes flashing with passionate pride. I little knew it; but it was then I first saw Miriam of *The Human Tragedy*.

Thus, Naples, Vesuvius, and Capri added their own layers of remembrance to the foundations of my Poem; and though I have more than once seen them since, and with more ample leisure, I always think of them as I saw them first during those seemingly purposeless weeks of youthful wandering.

On returning to Rome for a couple of nights I arranged to travel homeward by *vetturino* in the company of an English family whom I had seen often during the winter, who were journeying in the same direction. As we drove along the Via del Babuino to the Porta del Popolo, I halted at a

flower-stall, often visited by me in the course of my sojourn, to buy a rose, selecting the most beautiful. "But," said the flower-girl, "that will spoil the entire plant." "I cannot help that," I said plaintively, "but I want it." She cut and gave it to me. "How much is it?" I asked. "Pay some other time," she answered. "But there may be no other time, for I am leaving Rome this very moment." "Dunque non si paga. Addio, e buon viaggio" (Then you must not pay anything. Good-bye, and a pleasant journey to you). Such were the last words I heard at the close of my first Winter in Rome. In after-years they typified all I had gratuitously received from it in its maturing of my mind, in its fitting me for such work as I was capable of doing, and furnishing me with material for its future execution.

Our road lay through Cività Castellana, Terni, Narni, Clitumnus, Thrasymene, Perugia, and Spoleto; the sun shining, the nightingales warbling, the vines putting on their green livery, the fig-trees burgeoning, the *bovi* waiting to help us up the steepest hills, and girls and their mothers knitting on the doorsteps, and wishing us well on our way. It took five nights and six days to get to Florence. As in the dusk of the sixth day we descended upon the City of Flowers, the fire-flies thronged the air above and around us. The whole journey was a feast of natural beauty and fifteenth-century art, and contributed to that intimacy with Italian country life I afterwards widened and

deepened by frequent and prolonged visits. It stripped me of that insularity of familiar knowledge that marks so much of English literature, though least of all in our poetry; for poets are wanderers by temperament, and very little foreign travel serves to rouse their imagination; their rapid seizure of the Real, and transfiguration of it into the Ideal, being part of their "so potent art."

Early in the previous Autumn of 1862, I had spent, as I have elsewhere described, a fortnight in Florence, and then quitted it with the resolve, carried out in due course, to pass a winter in it. But now I felt I must return to England, and see what had been done at Hailey in my absence. My road thither was somewhat devious, for I could not resist the desire to complete my Winter and Spring in Italy by a visit, even if a hasty one, to Ravenna, Ferrara, Padua, Venice, and Verona. I have visited them all since, more leisurely, but I am glad I saw them as they then were: Ravenna, unroused as yet from its centuries of slumber, just as when Byron saw it, and as yet scarcely conscious that Dante was sepulchred amid its untrodden Basilicas; Ferrara, still with grass-grown streets and only dreamily remindful of Tasso; Verona, better known to those who had not seen it as one of the fortresses of the Quadrilateral than for its old and spacious amphitheatre; and Venice, still chafing at its Austrian chains. I carried away impressions rather than knowledge of them; but I fancy it was they, and not closer intimacy later on acquired, that

helped to augment the subject-matter for future, but as yet wholly unforeseen, poetic use.

If I have seemed to write at excessive length on this first sojourn in Rome, I have done so because, though the visible literary outcome was at the time less than scant, I have always felt, and indeed have no doubt whatever, that the foundations of one's poetic future, such as it has been, were being slowly laid during those six months.

On reaching England at the end of May 1863 I found that the alterations at Hailey had cost considerably more than I had contemplated, and saw clearly that the *animus revertendi* with which I had quitted Italy could not be carried out in the ensuing winter. Once removed from its absorbing sights, there began to dawn on me the consciousness that I had, so far, in no degree justified my abandonment of a possibly lucrative profession, or vindicated the assertion of irresponsible personal freedom. It could not even be said to me, as in the fable of La Fontaine, "Vous avez chanté ; *dansez maintenant*" ; for I had not even sung. I had nothing to show for the two years that had now expired since I bade farewell to the Inner Temple and a legal career. I had enjoyed myself vastly ; but I did not then know or suspect that the bread cast so recklessly on the waters would come home to me after many days. Left to my own reflections, away from the glamour of the land with "the fatal gift of beauty," I could not help feeling that, so far, I was a hedonistic failure. The conclusion was

not an agreeable one. But from something mercurial in one's temperament, and a certain almost fatalistic self-confidence, I have never suffered long from discouragement. Moreover, I was young; and he must have but a meagre equipment for the journey through life who, in youth, can own himself bankrupt of faith and hope.

It was unfortunate that Haileybury College, only a few minutes' walk from Hailey Lodge, as I found it rather pretentiously named, was closed, and so remained while I lived near it. But a few miles away, at Hertford, at Waltham Abbey, Waltham Cross, and in the neighbourhood of Broxbourne, I found kind and hospitable friends, with whom I not infrequently rode, drove, or played croquet, then the prevailing game; entertaining them in turn in simple bachelor fashion. Friends from London occasionally passed a few days with me—I could put up only two at a time—and one of the recently married sisters of my sister Winifred's husband frequently came to my cottage home with the bloom of her young and striking beauty, and rode with me when I could contrive to hire for her a riding-horse. My dear Mother, and an as yet unmarried sister, were my first guests; but, as they were living in Yorkshire, their visit could not often be repeated. But my Mother, the gentlest yet the most uncompromising of moralists, safeguarded my "respectability" by providing me with a middle-aged cook-housekeeper, as plain in appearance as

in cooking, and a younger house-parlourmaid, who, had she been disposed to wander outside the paths of propriety, would be well supervised and controlled by her older companion. They constituted the whole of my necessarily inexpensive household.

The furnishing of the cottage was rendered easier to my own absolute ignorance in such a matter by a kind friend, much of my own age, who lived at Waltham in one of the old houses there, and has now been dead for many years. He had been at Oxford, but not, I think, taken his Degree, since he had there become a Roman Catholic, and had brought from College, as his main accomplishment, the "aesthetic" taste which was then coming into vogue. This he applied, in the simplest and cheapest manner, to my benefit, and made my little home, I think, a sample of quiet and unluxurious refinement. The garden was in keeping with the house; small, but well cared for, and with as many flowers in it as its modest size would allow. Though its boundary abutted on a lane, lane it was, and not a high-road; and Haileybury College, as I have said, being closed, it was but little frequented, so that it gave me the twin boons of retirement and peace. I sate, for hour after hour, in the garden, with books that, for the most part, would not seem to feed the poetic temperament, or foster the desire to justify it. I read, with the utmost care, John Stuart Mill's *Political Economy* and *Logic*, two solid works demanding

the closest attention; and this I gave to them. But I did not abstain from renewing and extending my familiarity with Virgil, Horace, and Lucretius. I remember making the acquaintance of the works of Taine, and of the fascinating prose of Renan, so far as it had yet been given to the world; and I have a vivid recollection of my surprise at finding that Rousseau, "the self-torturing sophist," could, in *Émile*, occasionally deviate into sense. As I have confessed, I felt thoroughly disappointed with myself. But no more then than at any subsequent time did I attempt to write verse without the spontaneous impulse to do so, or go in search of a theme that did not readily come to me.

My delight, therefore, may be imagined when, one evening, without any premonitory admonition, I found myself composing the first eight stanzas of *Madonna's Child*, that open that little poem which now appears at the beginning of the Second Canto of *The Human Tragedy*. To this day I am unable to explain how they came, or whence; save that, as regards locality, the solitary northern shore of the Mediterranean, and equally as regards the note struck in "Madonna's Shrine," I was on familiar ground. Doubtless they were the Real transfigured by imaginative memory into the Ideal, thereby conforming to the definition of Poetry I had not then consciously arrived at, not having in any way considered that question, but the definition I propounded many years later, and

have more than once found it necessary, in the interest of what I believe true criticism, to reiterate.

But alas ! at the close of the eighth stanza composition ceased as suddenly as it had begun ; the reason being, I should think, that I knew as little whither, as I knew why, the stanzas had thus rushed on me. It is idle to attempt to explain, save in the vaguest manner, such foreshadowings of the mind, which resemble those fugitively ephemeral and disappointing anticipations of Spring that sometimes occur in February, to be followed by March winds and checking frosts. I did not then know what I learned later, that other poets passed through a prolonged pause in poetic production before finally starting on the full demonstration of their poetic power. Such a pause, I believe, was of no slight advantage to them. Many works, both in verse and prose, have been marred by being written before their authors were duly equipped to write them.

In the course of that unproductive summer of 1863 were laid, at least, the foundations of such gardening knowledge as I may later have acquired. The taste in gardening at that time was anything but good, and I did not at once liberate myself from the "bedding-out" system in vogue. But I found in my rides through Hertfordshire woods and lanes some elementary corrective to the formal horticultural conventionality of the period ; a readiness to receive which had descended to me from

my grandfather's more primitive gardening at Rothwell Haigh.

The winter of 1863-4 was passed in England, and, for the most part, at Hailey. But my recollection of it is curiously vague; the vagueness, I surmise, arising from its uneventfulness, whether in regard to actual occurrences or to literary productiveness. I wrote a few prose papers, which were published anonymously, in some monthly magazine or other. But the most indulgent criticism could not have claimed for them the slightest approach to permanent value.

The ensuing Spring and Summer of 1864 were passed in the same purposeless manner, with nothing to show for the creeping-on of time. I continued to read in my garden, to ride through woods and lanes, to offer hospitality, and to accept it. The distance from London was short, the journey easy; and a bachelor's house, however small, and however unluxurious his establishment, offers a freedom that not unoften makes it more attractive than that of married folk. The institution of week-end visits had not then come into fashion; a more casual hospitality still maintaining old tradition, and rendering conversation more serious and solid, since confined to fewer people. I travelled about our own lovely land (now more fully known to me) much less than I ought to have done, though some of the more picturesque spots of Somersetshire and Devonshire drew me towards them. But their combs,

countless streams, strong sea-bluffs, bold headlands, and lonely moorlands, much as they enchanted one, stirred no string in the seemingly henceforth dumb instrument I once had counted on as the chief companion and consolation of my life. Creeds, Philosophies, Theories, metaphysical, theological, and ontological, occupied my thoughts more than the emotions of the human heart or the sorrows of the human mind; chilling enthusiasm, limiting sympathy, and stifling expression. I now can retrospectively see that one's education and the storing of one's mental, moral, and emotional capacity were nevertheless going forward. Had I known it at the time, what pain it would have spared me!

CHAPTER VII

Florence—Thomas Adolphus Trollope—Spring in Tuscany—Life in a Villa—Vallombrosa, Camaldoli, and La Vernia—The Dante Festival.

WHILE I was yet only a lodger in Hailey, after my acquiring a lease of it and its farm from Michaelmas 1862, a friend who was engaged on a *Life of Cavour*, which I rather think he never completed, was anxious to go to Turin to gather materials for it. I offered to accompany him, if he would go on as far as Florence, and there pass a week or ten days, for I was beginning to pine for a glimpse, if only a preliminary glimpse, of Tuscany. He consented, and, going straight to Marseilles by Paris, we took boat to Leghorn.

I can never forget my first sight of the land that, in future years, I was to visit so often, to love so dearly, and to write of so fervently. We had not gone far from Marseilles before something in the machinery went wrong, and we had to hug the shore most of the way. For myself, not impatient to shorten the journey, it was a welcome mishap. It was the Autumn Equinox. The sea was unruffled, the sky without a cloud. I have

described in *The Human Tragedy*, far better than I can in prose, what I gained by it :

Dark were the thoughts that passed through Godfrid's mind,
As sleepless on the deck sleep made his own,
He skirted bay, and cape, and hills behind,
And in their hollows villages bestrewn,
Which, dimly seen, were beautiful divined,
And, since no sooner just descried than flown,
Held on his heart a fond romantic claim
For ever thence. If life could do the same !

But soon there crept a tremor overhead ;
The billows shook their white manes, and uprose ;
The sheathed east more large and crimson spread,
Like an imperious rosebud when it blows.

Then, from remotest summit to the shore,
And thickly dotted everywhere between,
As sped the vessel, frequent more and more,
On treeless slope, in stream-refreshed ravine,
Glistened the marble hamlets ; some that bore
Upon the beach, others in distance seen,
Like maidens dipping white feet in the spray,
Or dipped, and going up the hills away.

Landing at Leghorn, we broke our journey to Florence at Pisa for one night, and there I had my first view of the Arno, of early Tuscan frescoes in the Campo Santo, and of a Tuscan Duomo and Baptistery. The contrast between them and what I was accustomed to in my native land was bewildering, because so sudden ; and I needed the journey through the lower valley of the Arno between Pisa and Florence to recover serenity. A new aspect of Nature may surprise, but never embarrasses. I saw the Vintage for the first time, and its human accessories, and felt as "one

to the manner born." It was full of enchantment, but left me free to enjoy it with an appreciation due to temperament and ideals, and without any consciousness that one's poetic education was being promoted by it. A still stronger effect was produced by Florence itself; unstinted delight, without the faintest intention of ever turning it to any account. But through the retrospect of years I can see that Past, Present, and Future are but One; and that, then, notwithstanding seeming silence, one was being impregnated with far-off future utterances:

It was the season purple-sweet,
When figs are plump and grapes are pressed,
And all your sons with following feet
Bore a dead Poet to his rest.¹

You seemed to fling your gates ajar,
And lead me softly by the hand,
Saying, "Behold! henceforth you are
No stranger in our Tuscan land."

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No later wanderings can dispel
The glamour of those bygone years,
And through the streets I know so well
I scarce can see my way, for tears.

Yet, even then, another foreshadowing occurred to me one evening, when I was gazing down the Arno, watching the last streaks of sundown, and the flush

¹ On the day of my arrival in September 1862, Niccolini, the poet, was being buried, with both civil and military honours, in Santa Croce, to whom a memorial tablet has since been placed in what is now the *Via Cavour*, but was then known as the *Via Larga*.

on the lofty Carrara Mountains. It was the lyric beginning

Will the sun never set,
Will the twilight never fade ?
My heart is sick, my eyes are wet
With the night and his step delayed.
Go, loitering light, from the west !
Sink, floating light, in the stream !
Fold, breeze, thy pinions, and rest,
Rest, sleep, and dream.

Eleven years later, it found its place in the yearning words of Olive, after her first parting with Godfrid.

Florence is small, but how much greatness, of literature, architecture, sculpture, painting, and history, abide in it ! I soon became familiar with them all, because I loved them ; and many later and longer visits have only deepened that first impression.

Our brief sojourn there over, we drove to Bologna across the Apennines, halting for a night at a rough-and-ready inn on the summit, slept for yet another night at Bologna, and thence took train to Turin, where I left my companion to pursue his biographical investigations, and journeyed homeward, full of the intention of returning to Florence as soon as might be.

The carrying out of the intention was delayed by the precedence being given to Rome ; and it was not till late in the Autumn of 1864 that the Winter and following Spring were spent in the City of Flowers.

When the time arrived for doing so, I made straight for Nice, where the railway along the Riviera then ended, and drove, by diligence, to Genoa, passing through the towns and villages I had looked on from the sea in the Autumn, and that, so scanned, had seemed fairy palaces of white and many-coloured marble. Now, brought into closer contact with them, I could not help noting how squalid they were. But their picturesqueness more than counterbalanced their unswept streets and uncared-for dwellings. No sooner had one emerged from them than one was between the lonely mountains and the still lonelier sea. Suppressing their less attractive features, imaginative memory transfigured them later in the grave, sad journey of Godfrid and Olympia to Milan from the little chapel in Spiaggiascura, that closes with the melancholy line,

Ah! life is sad, and scarcely worth the pain.

There may have been fewer English residents in Florence in 1864 than there are now, but they were more noteworthy, more distinct personalities, and exercised more social influence among a people that, like the Florentines, are not prone to be lavishly hospitable. I had brought four or five letters of introduction with me, and, as a newly-arrived young bachelor, I was accorded a welcome much in excess of my merits. Charles Lever and his family; Thomas Adolphus Trollope, his delicate, gifted, and charming wife, and their

little girl Bice; Charles Fuller, the sculptor, and Mrs. Fuller, a delightful musician with a fine and highly-trained voice; Mde. Laussot, who afterwards married Karl Hillebrand, an accomplished master of three languages; Isa Blagden; George Maquay and his charming American bride; Messrs. French, the bankers; "Old Kirkup," as he was invariably called; Lady Orford and her two young daughters; Pulszki, the Hungarian patriot and exile, himself one of the most accomplished of men, with a singularly interesting family and social circle; Bakounin, the Russian Nihilist, and his fair young Polish wife; Sir George and Lady Otway—these and others of less note more than satisfied my readiness to avail myself of friendly intercourse.

Thanks to the Maquays, with whom I "banked," in my small way, I was at once cheaply provided with a couple of rooms, at number 14 Lung' Arno Accaiuoli, on the right bank of the river, well in view of the picturesque Ponte Vecchio, and whence I could also look up at *San Miniato* and Michelangelo's *Bella Villanella*. Breakfasting in my little sitting-room, facing the morning sun, I lunched anywhere or nowhere, and dined at the *Casino* (or Club) *dei Nobili*, in the *Via Tornabuoni*, to which I was admitted as a member. Some twelve or fourteen of us used to dine there every day, at a *table d'hôte* provided at five *lire* a head. One of the fourteen was Mr. Henry Labouchere, who, with myself, was

the only other Englishman. The regular diners were Florentines. I soon discovered there was a good deal of gambling in the club ; but in this I never shared, my taste for card-playing being slight, and my dislike of playing for money insurmountable.

To the professed idler—perhaps the French word *flâneur* is more expressive of the thing, since commoner in France than it was among Englishmen, in those days at least—such conditions as I have here described were singularly favourable. But life has always seemed to me far too serious for mere pleasurable diversion.

For Balls I cared but little, and Florence was a very dancing place. But I went to a certain number of these entertainments, mainly because of those I met there, and whose youth and comeliness always delight the eye and feed the imagination. I hired a riding-horse, but gave it up at the end of a month, finding the Cascine monotonous, and the suburbs of Florence singularly unfavourable to horse exercise. The galleries and churches of the Fair City are in winter chilly and damp ; but youth is heedless of discomfort it scarcely feels, and I spent much time within them. Vieusseux's Library had, and still has, a European reputation, and in it I found an ample supply of books and English papers.

One of the most valued friendships of my life, that with Thomas Adolphus Trollope, who was just twenty-five years my senior, was formed

shortly after my arrival, and we were often and much together, both in his delightful home in the *Piazza dell' Indipendenza*, and in the long walks we took. Almost every Sunday evening we joined a young circle at the house of an English lady in the town, who well illustrated the saying of Shakespeare that "small cheer and great welcome make a merry feast."

Though the author of the well-known *History of the Commonwealth of Florence* was so much older than myself, we seemed to be close friends from the very moment we first grasped each other's hands. Unlike his brother Anthony, who, though likewise a delightful companion, and brimming over with active intelligence, was in no accurate sense of the word intellectual, and as unhelpful and impatient an arguer as I ever met, Thomas Adolphus Trollope rejoiced in threshing out afresh the old metaphysical and theological problems, handling them with a rare dialectical skill; and many a duologue had we on those unendingly interesting themes.

But such were far from being our only diversion. He was known to all the English residents in Florence as "dear old Tom Trollope," not because of his age, for he was then but little past the meridian of life, but of the affection he inspired, and most of all in the younger and more attractive members of that community; and on many a delightful evening did we sally forth together to pass among folk of very moderate means, but fair looks, merry ways,

and congenial hospitality. I had not known him long before he took me one evening to one of the most agreeable houses I ever visited, that of Franz Pulszki, the Hungarian patriot and scholar, whom the events of 1848-9 had driven into exile. His wife, the daughter of a Viennese banker, was as charming a hostess as he was a genial host; and, assisted by her young children, she entertained the most heterogeneous body of guests I ever saw gathered together, all equally at home in his spacious Italian villa on the South side of the Arno.

On the occasion of my first evening there, not very long after my arrival, he quitted for a moment his valuable collection of coins he was showing to some other guests, and, coming over to where I was, said in the stentorian tones he seemed incapable of modifying:

“Ha! there you are. I see you have already made the acquaintance of this charming lady. But she must surrender you for a little, for I want to make you acquainted with her husband.”

Petitioning to be allowed to return, I rose, and soon found myself in the presence of the famous Nihilist, Bakounin, a huge mountain of a man who was sipping a tumbler of tea made in Russian fashion, and propounding to a circle of attentive listeners the most destructive social doctrines in the most cheerful manner. The little group around him made way for us.

“Here, Bakounin, I want to make known to

you an English Conservative who will listen to your revolutionary theories with amicable toleration, but whom you must not detain too long, for he has only just made the acquaintance of your wife, to whom I have no doubt he is longing to return."

The easy ways of that varied and polyglot society, where musicians, painters, patriotic versifiers, political fugitives with a price placed on their heads, erudite professors, and fair gracious women, gave one abundant choice of social diversion. Of Bakounin and his wife, a Polish lady some years younger than her eloquent husband, and endowed with the proverbial attractiveness of her race, I saw much during that Florentine Winter and Spring, cultivating with them an acquaintance singularly agreeable since so fresh and original.

After Sadowa and the introduction into Austro-Hungary of the Déak Constitution, Pulszki was free to return to Buda - Pesth. Within three months of doing so he lost his wife and eldest daughter, victims to the epidemic of Diphtheria that was then prevailing there. Many years later, when I visited him in the Hungarian capital on returning from an excursion to Greece, Constantinople, and Roumania, he narrated to me how he had lately met Bakounin in the streets of Geneva, how the famous Nihilist had said to him that, despairing of the success of all projects for the amelioration of Society and Mankind, he was starving himself to

death, which he calculated would occur in about three days' time!

Not long after my arrival in Florence, coming out of the *Caffè Doney*, I met an old friend, Captain Harry Weldon, whose acquaintance I had first made when he joined the 18th Lancers, a regiment restored to the Army List at the time of the Crimean War. I found he had left the Army, and was married; and of both I saw much in the course of the next few weeks. I need not extol the voice and other gifts of Mrs. Weldon, since they are well and widely known. They were the guests of Mr. Spence, whom I should have named among the most prominent figures in Florence at that date, and for many subsequent years. He owned the famous Villa Medici at Fiesole; and I dined there on Christmas Day.

It is possible that, had I been leading a more solitary life, I might have "found my voice" sooner than I did. But many acquaintances, a few congenial friends, the artistic attractions of Florence, no little music, regarded at that time as exceptionally good, though it would not be highly esteemed to-day, when musical execution has made such striking advance and critical appreciation of it has become so much more fastidious, filled up much of my time. Reading consumed the rest; and, with no definite purpose, though with deep interest, I devoted many an evening to becoming familiar with every incident in the life of Savonarola, and

with much of his sermons and his writings. This naturally was associated with Lorenzo de' Medici, his companions, and the Italian Renaissance; thus providing me with the material for the drama of *Savonarola*, written so many years later. But my utter unproductiveness at that time continued to reproach and trouble me, compelling me to feel distressfully that I had in no degree justified my abandonment of the Bar and the assertion of personal freedom. But it never for a moment occurred to me to retrace my steps. Freedom of existence and mind at all cost, at every sacrifice, still remained my steadfast Ideal.

The climate of Florence during the strictly Winter months is neither helpful to invalids nor pleasurable to the fastidious. I was not among the former, and perhaps a rather callous supernumerary of the latter. My rooms were often bathed in sunshine whose companion was a piercing *tramontana* wind; nor is it till the nightingales begin to sing, the fire-flies to flicker among the olive-trees and over the rising spears of the corn, and the yellow banksia roses and Wistaria to bloom, that the Fair City unfolds its charms. Then it is :

When mount I terraced slopes arrayed
In bridal bloom of peach and pear,
While under olive's phantom shade
Lupine and beanflower scent the air,

The wild-bees hum round golden bay,
The green frog sings on fig-tree bole,
And, see! down daisy-whitened way
Come the slow steers and swaying pole.

The fresh-pruned vine-stems, curving, bend
Over the peaceful wheaten spears,
And with the glittering sunshine blend
Their transitory April tears.

O'er wall and trellis trailed and wound,
Hang roses blushing, roses pale ;
And, hark ! what was that silvery sound ?
The first note of the nightingale.

Curtained, I close my lids and dream
Of Beauty seen not but surmised,
And, lulled by scent and song, I seem
Immortally imparadised.

When from the deep sweet trance I wake
And gaze past slopes of grape and grain,
Where Arno, like some lovely lake,
Silters the far-off seaward plain,

I see celestial sunset fires
That lift us from this earthly leaven,
And darkly silent cypress spires
Pointing the way from hill to Heaven.

Then something more than mortal steals
Over the wavering twilight air,
And, messenger of nightfall, peals
From each crowned peak a call to prayer.

And now the last meek prayer is said,
And, in the hallowed hush, there is
Only a starry dome o'erhead,
Propped by columnar cypresses.

Why I could not, or at any rate did not, write those stanzas then, was, I suppose, because the deeper springs of life had not yet been filled, though I was already twenty-nine. I felt, sensuously, all that is expressed in them, but they had to wait for utterance. Had they flowed from one then, or

had I known that the springs were being gradually filled, how much happier one would have been.

It was when the magical change from Winter to Spring had stolen over Tuscany that I paid my first visit, with two companions, to Vallombrosa, Camaldoli, and La Vernia, then all of them convents or, as we say, monasteries. Trollope was too busy completing his *History of the Commonwealth of Florence* to be of the party; nor was it till two years later that I repeated the visit, with him for guide. But he already knew every inch of the journey, and put us in the way of making it with convenience and pleasure. The railway took us but a very short distance out of Florence. Then our road lay through Campiobbi and Pelago, driving in a country *bagherino* from the first to the second, and entrusting ourselves to Antonio, popularly surnamed "da Pelago," who had been apprised by Trollope of the intended arrival of his friends. Punctually awaiting us was the said Antonio, with likely-looking mules, bridled and saddled for the excursion. The road to Vallombrosa, even then, though stony and devious, was fairly good according to Italian standards; and when, about *Ave Maria*, we approached the Convent, the Prior and his monastic companions standing in the gateway gave the impression of refined monastic life. The hospitable tones in which we were welcomed, our plain but carefully served supper, and our sleep-suggesting beds in clean simple cells, confirmed

that first impression. Nothing on the following morning disturbed or modified it; and the climate, when we were taken to see some of the timber of biggest girth in the surrounding woods, felt little less genial than we had left in Florence. The thoughts and feelings I then experienced made me for a while a silent companion, after we had bidden our kindly monastic hosts farewell, and prayed them to accept a slight return for their gentle hospitality.

Our progress to the Convent of Camaldoli throughout the afternoon and early evening was of a rougher and wilder sort. Road, in the ordinary signification of the word, there was none. But Antonio knew every turn and winding of the way, walking by or behind us, quite unwearied, but sometimes, where the path was steepest and stoniest, availing himself of a grasp of the tail of one or other of the mules. Camaldoli lay secluded amid wilder and more picturesque surroundings than Vallombrosa, the white garb of its serious occupants lending it, however, a refined aspect. But we could see that there was still a covering of snow at no great elevation above it; and the air had in it what Shakespeare calls an eager and a nipping feeling. Surmising in us more Capuan sensitiveness than they themselves suffered from, or at least were allowed to humour, our hosts at once made a goodly fire in the guests' room of huge well-dried boughs, four or five feet in length, that served for a sort of fender-hassock, and which we pushed in from where they converged on the hearth,

by which in a short time we were thoroughly well roasted. Small mountain river trout, *faggioli*, or beans, and a dish of admirably cooked *macheroni* composed a really luxurious supper. The Prior, who sate by us while we thus regaled ourselves, plied us with questions about the world without, and was most anxious to know how fared their good friend, Trollope. We were equally curious about Camaldolese life, and listened with especial interest to his description of the Sacro Eremo, higher still and deeper in the forest than the Convent itself, and whither periodically a certain number of monks in rotation betook themselves for a more penitential period. There the snow lies thick most of the year ; and they had to sweep a path for themselves in the middle of the night in order to reach the chapel from their cells.

Hearing of these nocturnal austerities, we were not wishful to partake of them at the Sacro Eremo, but in the Convent Church at three in the morning, at which hour, we were assured, Matins were recited. The Prior urged that it would break in rudely on our slumbers. But we were importunate, and a promise was given that we should be roused at the hour named. Awaking the next morning at about seven, we were disappointed at not having been disturbed, but the Prior said he had taken compassion on our lay and mundane habits. Inwardly we suspected that this fatherly compassion had been extended to the whole community.

After an ample supply of black coffee and black bread, we mounted our mules to ascend to the Sacro Eremo. Deeper and deeper got the snow, but, despite the admonishing voice of Antonio, we pushed on, and suddenly found our mules imbedded to the saddle girths. Then, for the first time, Antonio lost his head, betaking himself to those semi-blasphemous invocations to all the saints and devils that come so promptly to Italian lips in moments of exasperation. At last, as though nothing else was of any avail, he bent down, struck the snow with the back of his hand, exclaiming, "Corpo di Giuda!" ("Body of Judas"). Watching the characteristic performance from the safe and comfortable elevation of my saddle, I meditated on the persistency of Pagan tradition in Italy, and bethought me of the line in Virgil:

Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo.

("Since Heaven will not listen to my prayers, I will appeal to nether Hell.") I need scarcely say that, encouraged by words and copious offers of assistance, Antonio succeeded in wheeling the mules round, and setting their noses downhill, advance to the Eremo being perforce abandoned. For a time he remained absolutely silent as we descended to the Convent. But at last he heaved a deep sigh, and exclaimed, "Ahimè! Ho perduto tutta la mia devozione." My companions wondered what he meant. My Roman Catholic training came to their assistance, and I explained

to them that probably he had complied at Easter with the obligation of getting "absolved" from his sins at that period, and had been in a satisfactory spiritual state ever since, but that, having now indulged in such shocking language, he had "perduto tutta la sua devozione"; in other words, had now forfeited the state of grace he was in, and would have to try to get it back all over again.

Noon saw us on our way to La Vernia, the famous Franciscan Convent, familiar to the readers of Dante's *Divina Commedia*. Our progress was up a gradual pathless ascent; but I believe Antonio could have traversed it in the dark without missing his way. After several hours of delightful zigzagging at a foot's pace, we at length came in sight of the Monastery, impressed on the eye for life for any who has so approached it. Even Franciscan Convents vary in uncomeliness, those in the valley succumbing to civilizing influences more than those on the heights. La Vernia was in the latter category; and the severest laws of the saintly preacher of poverty were, we soon perceived, in full operation. That was just what we wanted. The only approach to comfort was the cordiality of the reception we met with; but in one's young days what is material comfort in comparison with new and striking experiences? Pious ignorance, and what some people would call gross superstition, were the dominant notes in the conversation of these brown-frocked, bare-footed *Frati*. They allowed that they often in severe Winter

weather were hard pressed for food, but they had never experienced what once befell some of their predecessors, *tanti anni fa*, ever so many years ago, when the Brothers were menaced with absolute extinction by famine. Dragging themselves and each other into the chapel of the Convent, they prayed that Heaven might take compassion on them. Suddenly they heard the great bell at the gateway ring, and thither the least weak of the community tottered. All around, the snow lay thick as ever; but lo! at the gate was a huge basket of bread and food of other kinds. Need I add that the traditional tale ended with the statement, evidently made in perfect good faith, that the Madonna had interceded for them, and *Gesù Cristo* had sent this relief.

“Now,” I said to my companions, “is our chance of hearing Matins at three in the morning.” The request that we might be roused at that hour was accepted as the most natural thing in the world; and, sure enough, when I was lapped deep in slumber on the hardest of beds, I felt a cold hand on my shoulder, shuffled on my clothes, and was shown, by the light of a dim hand-lamp of the old Etruscan pattern, into the long corridor. I found my travelling companions coming half-awake out of their cells, and the Franciscan monks and lay-brothers moving slowly, two by two, and chanting or droning a psalm, towards the underground chapel of which they had told me. Only one large tall candle lighted the

way, but I could both see and feel that we were descending. Passing into the chapel having all the dimensions of a church, the Brothers prostrated themselves for a time before the high altar, in silence; then rising, and forming themselves again into processional order, they moved towards the closed doors at the other end facing the sanctuary. Then came the sound of the opening and pushing back of heavy doors on stiff hinges, and we were in the full moonlight, with the undulating line of the Apennines clear in the distance. Turning sharply to the right, we were again under cover till we reached the real underground chapel. I thought I could see a large Luca della Robbia over the Altar, which was verified by the next day's daylight, as the finest one in the world, an almost life-size representation of the Crucifixion. After the intoning of the *Miserere*, the monks formed afresh, and led the way back to the corridor, where each of them silently entered his own cell. We did the same, enchanted, in the literal sense of the word, by what we had seen and heard, but soon plunged again into the refreshing slumbers of youth.

Shortly before making this expedition to the three Convents, I had shifted my quarters from the Lung' Arno, in Florence, to an all but unfurnished little villa outside the *Porta Romana*, commanding a view of the City, Fiesole, and all the hills on the other side of the valley. It belonged to a furrier who had a shop in

Florence, but had been suggested to me by Miss Isa Blagden, who was herself in a villa not far from it. A more comfortable one had been rejected by her because, as she playfully said, the contadini occupying it had three handsome daughters, and my reputation must be carefully guarded. I was well content with the smaller one, rudimentarily convenient though it was, as all I wanted was to sleep and breakfast in it, and loiter away the morning among the sprouting vines, burgeoning fig-trees, purple anemones, blood-red tulips, and white jonquils. Between one and two I went down to the city, and there remained till nine or ten of an evening, using the Club and Vieuasseux's as what the Florentines call my *recapito*, or place where you leave and call for your parcels. Spring is capricious in every European country; and I walked home in May three nights running in a slight snow-storm that had by morning left no trace. Then real, sunny, debonair Spring spread itself over Tuscany, and life was worth living indeed. But a shadow was cast over one's enjoyment by the death, not unexpected, of Theodosia Trollope, the charming wife of my friend; and, as he and I walked away together from her grave in the English cemetery, where also lies Elizabeth Barrett Browning, he said he felt very lonely, and would I not come and stay with him in his Villa in the Piazza dell' Indipendenza? Thither I betook myself with my sparse baggage that afternoon;

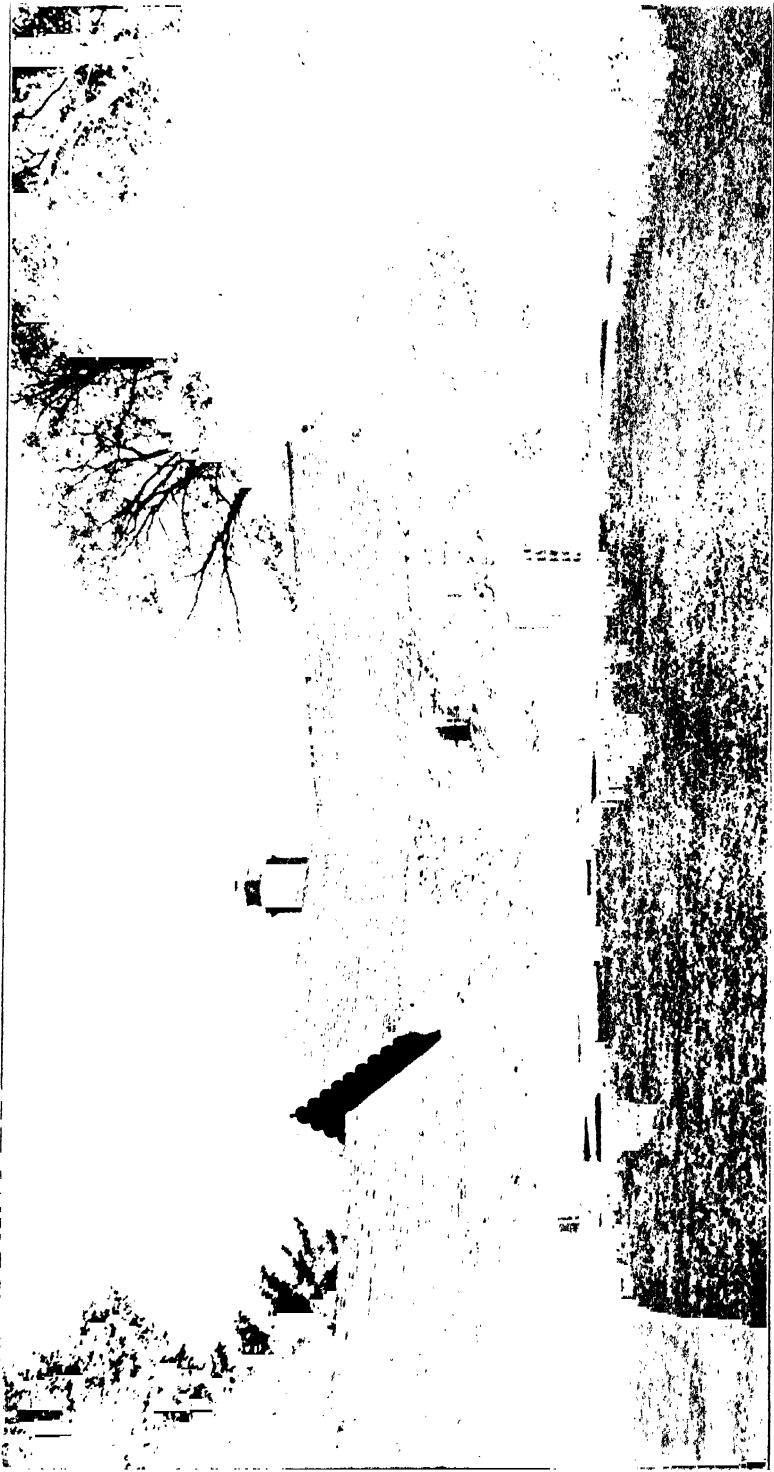
and the change was from Spartan austerity to a happy combination of English comfort, Italian art, and a garden blooming with roses. I did all I could to distract him, and to concentrate his attention on the final chapters of his *History of the Commonwealth of Florence*. He was still, in the matter of style, somewhat under the scarcely beneficial influence of Carlyle, whose simpler manner in the *Life of Stirling* I have always admired more than in his later and more popular ejaculatory writings. In opinion and tone of thought, Trollope was a traditional Liberal of the more sanguine kind; generous, but hardly practical, it has always seemed to me, because allowing too little for certain permanent forces alike in individual and collective human nature. I mention this, because, many years later, his brother Anthony said to me one day, when staying at Swinford, "You know how attached I am to you. But there is one thing for which I cannot forgive you. You have made my brother Tom a Conservative." Nothing could have been less true. Life had done for his brother what he attributed to me. But the end of this little story has yet to be told. Not many years later, Anthony himself became a "Unionist," and denounced Gladstone and all his works in the energetic language that was habitual in his fervid conversation.

After all but six months spent in Florence, it was time for me to turn my thoughts homeward. But it was impossible to bid it farewell

before witnessing the celebration of the Sixth Centenary of the Birth of Dante that was to be held on the 16th of May. By six o'clock on the morning of that day, Trollope and I were in our places in the Piazza Santa Croce, where a statue of the Poet by Fedi was to be unveiled, and eight thousand Italian Municipalities were to be represented in the Square by deputations carrying the gonfalons of their respective cities and communes. As the sculptor, whom I had met more than once, has for many years been dead, I may say that the Statue disappointed our expectations, as it has that of many a one since. But the ceremony was most impressive. After sundown, in the company of Charles Lever's daughters and two American young ladies, I traversed all the principal thoroughfares, nowhere being crushed or jostled, though the streets were crowded, for gentle Tuscan manners, now, I fear, deteriorated there as elsewhere, made movement easy and agreeable. Not the palaces and bridges of the city alone, but the outlying Villas on the hill-slopes for miles around, were illuminated with oil-fed lamps. The Piazza of the Uffizi was covered in and its pavement boarded over for a Peasants' Ball; and at the Pagliano Theatre were represented the most picturesque scenes from the *Divina Commedia*, Ristori, Salvini, and Rossi reciting the corresponding passages in the poem. Then many friendly and some tender farewells had to be taken; and on the following morning I started

for Paris, having as travelling companions, and very agreeable ones, Ristori, her husband, and their two young children. As the domes and towers of the Fair City faded from view, I recited to myself the lines I often had cause, again and again, to repeat :

Benedetta sia la Madre,
Che ti fece così bella.
Che tu sei tanto graziosa,
Che tu sei tanto vezzosa ;
Benedetta sia Tu !



HARRY LODGE
1862 to 1867.

CHAPTER VIII

Stand for Taunton—Visitors at Hailey—Marriage in 1865—Winter in Rome—Liszt—Moccolo, Moccolo!—Perugia and Assisi—Summer at Villa Trollope—Return to England, 1866.

WHEN, on returning to England, and again settling down quietly at Hailey in 1865, still no inward prompting nor impulse came to me to express myself in verse; I felt that do something I must; and material for the purpose had for some time been maturing in my mind. I thought I had something to say, and the best medium for saying seemed to be a novel of the more serious sort. The result was *An Artist's Proof*, a title open to cavil, since the signification in this case was rather what would more commonly be called "probation." Every morning three or four hours were given to it; and, as native impatience and perhaps excessive facility have always made composition to me either rapid or impossible, I calculated it would be completed by the end of July or early in August. But not content with this cure for self-dissatisfaction, I wrote a brief note to Mr. Disraeli, the Leader of the Conservative Opposition, asking if he thought I should be an

acceptable candidate at the General Election which was impending. No communication had passed between us since the dedication to him, of *The Season* four years previously, to which he had returned a cordial acknowledgment; leaving, also, his card on me at a temporary London address of mine in Clifford Street. My acquaintance with him was then limited to what I have stated; but, in answer to the inquiry as to my standing for Parliament, he wrote from Torquay, saying my letter should receive his early attention, but that, just at that moment, he was much occupied. What he referred to was the legacy he had received from Mrs. Williams, which it was rumoured amounted to £40,000. After a very brief delay, I received from him another note, telling me to put myself in communication with the Conservative Whips; and by the same post arrived a note from the then chief Conservative Whip, Lord William Nevill, since, and, I am happy to think, still, Lord Abergavenny, asking me to call at the Conservative Headquarters in Westminster as soon as possible. Time pressed, for the General Election had begun. On arriving at the Party Headquarters, I was told that Mr. Disraeli suggested my going to Tiverton, where Sir John Walrond had refused to stand again on the Conservative side against Mr. Denman, against whom my candidature would nominally be directed. But Mr. Disraeli had said I should have an opportunity, at the same time, of crossing swords with Palmerston,

the Prime Minister, whose own seat was absolutely secure. "But," added Lord William, "please go at once. We have put ourselves in communication with the local heads of the Party, whom you will find awaiting you on the platform at Tiverton."

I was soon on my way to Tiverton, rendered familiar to every one by Lord Palmerston's long tenancy of the seat, and his witty encounters with the Tiverton butcher. My recollection of the experiences at the Westminster Debating Society, where frequent opportunities had sharpened my tendency to spontaneous rhetoric, and had led many to be surprised at my abandonment of the Bar, they little knowing that, for other and deeper causes, I should not have been successful in a legal career, inspired me with confidence to think that I should be able to speak on a political platform without much difficulty. I had continued to follow the domestic politics of the day with interest, and I spent the railway journey in meditating the purport of my Election Address, not yet written, and the materials of my first speech.

As the train slackened into Tiverton, I could see three or four men evidently awaiting my arrival, but noticed that their faces had a rather anxious look. Its interpretation was soon told. "Before receiving the telegram from the Conservative Headquarters about your coming, Sir John Walrond," they said, "has, in response to our urgency, reconsidered his decision, and has consented to stand again. We are very sorry,

for we know you have come at Mr. Disraeli's wish, and are deeply grateful to you." "Never mind!" I said. "I am much pleased, at what you tell me; for Sir John Walrond will probably be returned, and I probably should not. Only keep my coming, and my being in the town, absolutely secret. I must sleep here to-night, and shall return to London to-morrow. Where had I better stay?" They had got a room ready for me; and as my desire for secrecy was great, I parted company with them there and then, and drove to the hotel they had named. As I did so, I saw Mr. Denman addressing an open-air crowd from the balcony of "The Red Lion," and Sir John doing the same from "The Crown and Sceptre." My sense of humour was much tickled by this comical termination to my projected Tiverton electoral campaign.

The only other occupant of the railway compartment the next morning, in the train for London, was a gentleman who introduced at once the subject of the General Election. Finding from my observations that I was a Conservative, he said that he was on his way to Town to try to get a second candidate for Taunton, the other one being Mr. Cox, the owner of the *Field*. I turned the matter over silently in my mind, as he continued to dilate on the prospects of the Party at Taunton, recalling to myself the contest of Mr. Disraeli at Taunton with Mr. Labouchere, afterwards Lord Taunton, in 1835, the year I was born. I remembered, of course only from hearsay, that he had

stood there on the balcony of the hotel in the dog-days in his shirt-sleeves of portentous dye, and replied to a scornful ejaculation from the crowd, "You're a Poet!", "I would rather be a Poet by the grace of God than a Privy Councillor by the grace of Lord Melbourne"; Mr. Labouchere having been recently honoured with that coveted title. The result of my meditations was that I told my companion the story of my abortive journey to Tiverton, prompted thither by Mr. Disraeli. "Then why," he said, "not be the second Conservative candidate at Taunton? I am sure you would be welcomed most cordially." The upshot was that, instead of going on to London, we both got out at Taunton; and, after his fellow-committee men had heard what he had to say, they begged me to stay till they could communicate by telegraph with the Conservative Headquarters in London. The reply came at once, strongly urging them to ask me to stand. They acted on the advice, and I consented. I was so utterly ignorant of such matters, that I did not ask the Party to contribute to the cost of the contest, as I ought to have done, a request to which I have no doubt they would willingly have acceded. But the time before the Polling Day was short, too brief indeed for any form of canvassing, and on me devolved therefore the less onerous and easier duty of making speeches. This, I was reiteratingly assured, I discharged with some success; and the assurance was kindly repeated to me many years afterwards by

Lord Tweedmouth, the Lord John Hay who was one of my opponents at Taunton, and quoted to me things I had said, and jokes I had made, that had utterly faded from my own mind.

The contest was "short, sharp, and decisive." I was not returned, and neither was Mr. Cox. But, to the best of my recollection, we were defeated by less than a hundred votes; and, after the Declaration of the Poll, I was lifted on the shoulders of some brawny west-country women, and borne to the hotel as though I were the victor, not the vanquished. I had entered heart and soul, as the phrase is, into the contest, and had thoroughly enjoyed it. Taunton had the reputation of being, even in those direct-bribery days, unusually corrupt; and when my expenses were returned to me, even for those few days, at £480, a sum I really was not justified in spending, I paid them and asked no questions; leaving Taunton with the loudly expressed invitation from several voices, "Come and stand again!" which I had no intention of doing. The same personal disqualifications I have alluded to, that would have attended me at the Bar, dislike to perpetual controversy, an irrepressible hankering for a totally different vocation, and a love of a country life, would have militated equally against me in the House of Commons. The mere gift of speech, if it be assumed I had it, does not suffice for success in either career. Returning to Hailey, I resumed the writing of my novel with perfect tranquillity, as though I had been a

spectator, and not a performer, in an entertaining episode. Before quitting the subject, I may recall that, on reaching home, I found a letter, both the context and signature of which were for some time quite illegible, but which I finally made out as written by Sir Edward Bulwer-Lytton, whom I did not know, generously and encouragingly saying he had read a speech of mine at Taunton with much interest.

KNEBWORTH, STEVENAGE,
July 14, 1865.

DEAR SIR—I am extremely obliged by your kind and flattering letter, and thank you cordially for your support to us all three. Which of us is the weakest seems quite uncertain and very fluctuating. But it will certainly be the stiffest contest yet fought in Herts.

I am truly sorry to learn your defeat at Taunton, and the more so, as the cool readiness and ability of your addresses prove the loss we have sustained in the House of Commons, a loss, I trust, which will be but temporary.—Yours truly obliged,
E. B. LYTTON.

I returned a grateful reply, that was followed shortly afterwards by an invitation to a garden party at Knebworth, easy of access by rail from Hertford. Before the day named arrived, Sir Edward, who was one of the Conservative members for Hertfordshire, delivered a long platform speech at the county town, and I stood close by him while he did so. I recall the circumstance, because many years later his son, Robert, the second Lord Lytton, was one of my dearest friends. On his return from his Viceroyalty of India and residence at Knebworth, I was a not infrequent guest there.

On the one solitary occasion of my few hours' visit there when his father was host, what I most remember was that Dickens also was there, he and Bulwer speaking in the hall on behalf of a guild of Literature. Bulwer was anxious to establish, and that, on being introduced to Dickens, the latter walked with me to the Station in the friendliest manner, either never having seen, or magnanimously forgetting, certain unjust reproaches I had addressed to him in *My Satire and its Censors*. I never met him again. But, on that summer afternoon, even if I could only say "Vidi tantum," I had at least spoken with two men of manifest genius.

I never heard anything more of the guild, until a few days ago, January 1911, I read the following obituary notice in the newspaper, in which mention is made of it :

AN EARLY VICTORIAN ACTRESS

The death has occurred at St. Leonards-on-Sea of Mrs. Emmeline Catherine Compton-Mackenzie, widow of the well-known actor, Henry Compton (Charles Mackenzie), and for many years known on the stage as Miss Emmeline Montague. She was born in 1820, and after a successful career retired on her marriage in 1848. She was the mother of six actors and one actress, among the sons being the well-known comedian Mr. Edward Compton. The daughter, Katherine, married Mr. R. C. Carton, the dramatist. Her father, "Bath" Montague, was a popular low comedian. Her brother-in-law, Stephen Mackenzie, was the father of the late Sir Morell Mackenzie, the throat specialist, who attended the late Emperor Frederick in his last illness.

Mrs. Compton, as Miss Emmeline Montague, played

Juliet at Drury Lane Theatre in 1839. Afterwards she acted all the leading Shakespeare heroines, distinguishing herself especially as Juliet, Rosalind, and Ophelia. She was also a favourite Lady Teazle, and during a long provincial novitiate she made striking successes in the plays of Sheridan Knowles and Bulwer-Lytton. After her London *début* Mrs. Compton made such rapid headway that Queen Victoria honoured her with a command performance at Covent Garden. In this she appeared as Juliet to the Romeo of William Elton, the occasion also being notable for the reappearance of Charles Kemble, after his retirement, in the part of Mercutio. Among the famous actors with whom she appeared were Macready and old William Farren. When Lord Lytton started a company which was known as the Literary Guild, and included several members of the *Punch* staff and had as its head Charles Dickens, Miss Montague took an important part. She appeared with the company in a performance of *Not so Bad as we Seem*, by Lord Lytton, performed for the first time at Devonshire House, Queen Victoria and the Prince Consort being present. She had been living in seclusion at St. Leonards-on-Sea for many years.

I suspect that Bulwer-Lytton's letter to me had been prompted by something Mr. Disraeli had said to him, and that it depended only on myself to adopt a public political career under the most favourable auspices. What I shall shortly relate will show why, even had I entertained any such settled purpose, it became practically impossible, if I had any just sense of personal responsibility. Macaulay, who had tried both, has said that the man who has equal opportunities of the literary and the political career, and elects the latter, is insane. I entirely concur in that opinion; unless the man prefers notoriety, the perils of a passing popularity, and a

possibly large but always precarious salary, together with the perpetually recurring necessity of compromising with his conscience, to the dignified serenity of Letters, the hope of doing some good to his fellows, and the certainty of being able to avoid inflicting on them or his country any injury.

I offered my novel, when it was finished, to Messrs. Chapman & Hall, who replied that, as the Autumn publishing season was approaching, it should be considered at once. When their decision reached me it was to the effect that their Reader had reported it was the best novel he had read for a long time; that they were willing to pay a goodly sum for it at once, and, after a certain specified sale, an additional sum of about the same amount.

I confess I was surprised by what they said; for my opinion, even then, of the work, regarded as a novel, was much lower. I thought it was fairly well written, and contained a good deal of thought of the independent kind. I say this only to help to explain what was more or less unintelligible to me, till many years later, when, in a Trial at Law in which Messrs. Chapman & Hall were engaged, it transpired that George Meredith was and had for some time been their Reader. I did not make his acquaintance till several years later, and never put the question to him, since I thought my doing so might be disagreeable to him. But I do not doubt that he was the Reader who had reported so favourably of *An Artist's Proof*, influenced, as he was pretty sure to have been, by the

thoughtfulness of the book, and the disquisitions, philosophical and other, it contained.

It was but natural, however, that I should have been gratified by the opinion expressed of it, and the tangible evidence that the publishers were ready to act on it. Nor was I the first or the last author who hastily assumed that I had only to write novels to be paid for them. In those days the return earned by even the most popular novelists was nothing like what it afterwards became ; and I was sanguine enough to regard it as probable that I should be able to rely on a yearly income from that source.

During the months of June and July, when occupied with the writing of my book, I received a certain number of visits from friends resident in London, but the only visitors I vividly remember are Captain and Mrs. Weldon. I found the latter a delightful companion, for she had a genuine love of wild-flowers, for which we used to go in search together. But perhaps her greatest charm, many-gifted though she was, was her voice, of the highest quality and most careful cultivation, and she used to sing to me by the hour together. Already, though she had not yet made his acquaintance, she had an enthusiastic admiration for Gounod's music, with which, through her interpretation, I became tolerably well acquainted.

Not long after the end of the Taunton Election episode, and the reception of the welcome letter from Messrs. Chapman & Hall, T. A. Trollope

arrived in England to see his *History* through the press ; and, as he was making his headquarters at his brother's, at Waltham Abbey, he would be only six or seven miles distant from me. About the middle of August, I found, one day I had been spending in London, that, on looking at my watch, I could not possibly catch the train at Bishopsgate Street, then the terminus of the Great Eastern Railway, by which I had intended to return to Hailey. It was the time of year when London was supposed to be empty, and I was in doubt as to how I should spend the hour or more at my disposal. Suddenly I remembered that a letter of introduction Miss Blagden had given me on my taking farewell of her in Florence had not yet been presented, and that the address on it was close by where I was standing. Her reason for giving it me, she said, was that I should there find the young lady of whom I had asked, on seeing a photograph of her in Isa's album, "Who is that?" eliciting the reply, "The girl you ought to marry, if you can." I attached no importance to the remark, even though I knew, from general report, that she was one of four sisters who, a few years previously, had lived in Florence with their Mother, since dead, and been much admired. I had little expectation of finding any one at that time of year ; but, on inquiry at the house, was told that the lady who was supplying, as far as possible, the Mother's place, having lived with the family for many years in the joint character of

governess and friend, and "one of the Miss Mulocks," were "at home." I found myself in the society of a very accomplished woman of middle life, and a Miss Mulock, not the one Miss Blagden had spoken of, but her sister. They were all intimately acquainted with Trollope, and other residents in Florence known to me, which, together with their love of the City of Flowers, rendered conversation easy and agreeable. Before leaving, I asked if, in case Trollope could join us, they would all three do me the honour of paying a few days' visit to my cottage in Hertfordshire. They gave a willing assent, and said that Miss Hester Mulock, who was staying with a friend at Leamington, but would be in London in a day or two, would, they felt sure, gladly come with them.

The entertainment I could offer was of an exceedingly modest character ; but as Mr. Homan-Mulock was an Irish landlord with an estate in King's County, and had, I think, fifteen children, his daughters had probably been accustomed to an unluxurious bringing up whether in Ireland at Bellair, or in France and Italy, where their parents had taken them for the purposes of education. The visit, therefore, was a delightfully successful one. Trollope was always the best of company ; and fair young faces had the effect of stimulating his mind, as they have on all rightly constituted men of any mental attainments. I have little doubt that his friendly partiality for me made him, as the phrase is, sing my praises when I was

not present. Whenever he and I fell to a duologue on high or deep theme, it was a case of

This to hear
Would Desdemona seriously incline.

She'd come again, and with a greedy ear
Devour up my discourse.

But Trollope had to make his visit to England as brief as possible ; for, since I had left him after the Dante Festival in May, he had sold his house in Florence for a good round sum, property for the moment being at a premium there, as it had been declared the temporary Capital of Italy to the dethronement of Turin, and had bought an old Villa, not in the best repair, at Ricorboli, outside the Porta San Niccolò, commanding an extensive view over Florence and its adjacent hills. Of this and its consequences I shall have to relate something farther on. Meanwhile I persuaded Miss Middlecoat and the two young ladies under her charge to pay me another visit. Before it was over, I was engaged to Miss Hester Mulock, which dear old Trollope, on hearing of it, declared in his downright way, “the best day’s work you have ever done.” We were married on the 14th of November of the same year (1865) in the quietest manner, and we crossed the Channel, that afternoon, on our way to Italy. Our goal was Rome, where we proposed to spend the Winter and Spring. But we were to break our journey for a week or so at the Villa at Ricorboli, of which Trollope

had now taken possession, surrounded by an army of workmen. Thither we travelled by easy stages, halting for two or three days in Paris, and thence moving on by Mont Cenis, Susa, Turin, and Bologna. Our welcome by Trollope was most cordial; and we found that, like Curio "with a taste," depicted by Pope in his *Moral Essays*, he had already developed an irresistible tendency to spend more on his new home than he had received for the sale of his old one, a result that his brother Anthony had predicted was sure to happen. He could not appear in the streets of Florence without being hailed by a succession of vendors of antiques, who lay in wait for him. I do not think he was himself an expert in such matters, but he listened with his better ear, for he was already somewhat deaf of the other, to every architect, builder, and collector of curios that sought him out. Of one of his purchases, I remember, he was especially proud, and not without reason. At some time or another, some very beautiful marble columns had been removed from the Duomo; and, as a "profound secret," which of course enhanced their price, he was offered these at a goodly price, and paid it. *Ainsi de suite*; and we saw he had started on a career of architectural and decorative extravagance.

On reaching Rome, we stayed at the Hôtel de Russie, near the Porta del Popolo, till we could find apartments to suit us. This we did with Mr. and Mrs. Barfoot, whose flat faced the top of the

Trinità de' Monti steps, and having in front the house still bearing the inscription :

PURIOR HIC AER, LATE HINC PROSPECTUS IN URBE.

The view from our sitting-room window commanded the whole of Rome, with Saint Peter's and the Pamfili-Doria gardens in the distance. Barfoot was the English saddler, whose shop, much the resort of the Roman Hunt, was in the Via del Babuino. His wife was a very agreeable and kindly woman, the mother of two young children. Our meals, other than our breakfast, we got from Nazzari in one of those thoroughly well-heated metal boxes, then so common in the Eternal City, and breakfast was prepared for us by Mrs. Barfoot. We had every reason, from first to last, to be satisfied with arrangements so easily concluded. The "waiting" at meals was confined to a typical Italian woman approaching middle life, who, I fancy, could neither write nor read, but had abundance of intelligence and mother-wit, and who invariably said the right or at least the pleasant thing. Having been for many years in Rome and Florence when quite a young girl, my wife speaks Italian with familiarity. Marietta, the waiting-maid, early on in our occupation of the Trinità de' Monti flat, said, "But surely the Signora is Italian." I assured her such was not the case, and asked where she supposed my wife came from. Marietta looked fixedly at her for a moment, and replied, "Dal Paradiso" ("From Paradise"). My wife's knowledge of the language

was of the greatest advantage to me, assisting me to advance alike in pronunciation and everyday colloquialisms.

Rome was still such as I have described it when, as a bachelor, I spent my first winter in it. It was unchanged in any particular: dirty, unfragrant, ill-lighted, but picturesque beyond words; and we renewed and extended our acquaintance with its ruins. My former friend and guide, Charles James Hemans, was often of our company, and our guest at dinner. But one of our first tasks was to hire a couple of riding-horses, again at Jarrett's in the Piazza del Popolo; and there were few afternoons when we did not ride in the Campagna in some direction or another. Ever and anon, also, we followed the Roman Hunt. It was a propitious Winter for the purpose, and we were rarely kept out of the saddle by rain. Sometimes Miss Cushman, the accomplished American actress, who had for some time retired from the stage, and Miss Lloyd of Hengwrt accompanied us; for they wisely prolonged horse exercise beyond the age at which most women cease from it. We often met interesting people at Madame Laussot's; among them Liszt, who played for us the whole of his symphony on Paolo Malatesta and Francesca da Rimini. We thought it very noisy and very unmusical—an opinion, I believe, now prevailing among most real lovers of music.

We frequently enjoyed the hospitality of W. W. Storey, the well-known, gifted, and entertaining

American sculptor, and his wife. On one occasion a young man entered their drawing-room, whose name I had not caught as he was announced; but I at once said to myself, "How like Byron!" It was Byron's grandson, the late Lord Lovelace, then Lord Wentworth. At their table we met Mr. Odo Russell, the unofficially but officiously recognized diplomatic channel of communication between the English Government and the Vatican, of whom Pio Nono, when remonstrated with respectfully by a member of the College of Cardinals for so frequently receiving and seemingly much liking a Protestant Envoy, said, "Ma è così poco Protestante." He was one of the most charming of men, with whom, by degrees, I formed a sincere friendship.

But the Muse? But Poetry, or, if not Poetry, Prose, and Literature generally? Once again, my voice remained dumb, and my pen idle, but perhaps with better reason and more excuse than in the Winter I had three years previously passed in Rome, alone. The first year of married life, if a happy one, is not usually industrious, save under the pressure of immediate necessity. But I was once more unintentionally, but not disadvantageously, submitting to the universal teachings of the Eternal City, with its three thousand five hundred years of history and experience. The world contains no other such tutor. As Propertius said :

*omnia Romanae cedent miracula terrae ;
natura hic posuit quidquid ubique fuit.*

Shortly after arriving in Rome, we received the news of the sudden death of my wife's brother-in-law, her elder sister's husband, Mr. George Price, at Nice. He was an accomplished scholar, and was engaged in preparing youths for careers in life requiring wide and solid culture. Not long after, my wife's younger and newly married sister and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Kennard, came in the Spring to Rome, and joined us in our riding and driving expeditions. Of other incidents worth recording there were few. But I remember we found ourselves at the Carnival, then still held in the Corso in the old traditional manner, in the next balcony to the beautiful ex-Queen of Naples, whom we often met walking, betimes and alone, on the Pincian, and her almost equally lovely sister, the Countess Trani. Wishing to join in the "sports" of the Carnival, she filled a little trowel with confetti from a large sack full of them, and threw them at us. Until this had been done three or four times, we took no notice, thinking it might be accidental, not having the honour of personal acquaintance with her. But at last it was plain it was an invitation to battle. Count Trani joined in the fray, and so did my wife; and it ended by the remaining contents of the sack being showered at us. The mock combat ended by her presenting us with two pretty mementoes of it. The riderless horses galloped down the Corso; tapers were lit towards sundown, to the cry of "Moccolo, Moccolo." And then the crowd and the onlookers broke up and

departed, and the Forty Days of Lent, rigidly observed in Rome, began. I have described elsewhere, both in verse and prose, the ceremonies on Easter Day in Rome, now suspended; and, Easter falling late that year, we shortly afterwards brought our sojourn among the Seven Hills to a close. Feeling the desire, and perhaps the need, of being braced, after so long an experience of the somewhat relaxing air of Rome, we bade farewell to all our kind friends and moved on to Perugia, where we proposed to spend the month of May.

Perugia, though only one of the secondary cities of Italy, is perhaps the most interesting of these, whether in its history during the sanguinary supremacy of the Baglioni, in its architectural monuments, or its treasures of plastic and pictorial Art. Even a five months' residence in Rome had not blunted our appetites for the appreciation of these, in many respects so different from what we were familiar with there. Though the ramparts had been dismantled, and Papal Rule been abolished in the unsettled period that followed the short campaign in 1859 by France and Piedmont against Austria, Monasteries and Convents had not yet been suppressed, nor churches been despoiled of their altar-pieces to cram an *Accademia* at Perugia, as it is now, with such a number of pictures by Pietro Perugino as to mar their effect. The nominal master of Raphael, he was, of all that supreme artist's precursors, the most influential—a circumstance that has always heightened one's

admiration of the painter of the well-known fresco in Santa Maddalena de' Pazzi at Florence.

We spent May 1866 at Perugia, having quarters in the then only hotel, kept and managed by Italians, so that we could lead as simple a life as we had led at Rome. The only diversion was the music played three times a week opposite our windows by the band of the Regiment quartered in the town; and on these occasions, if at home, we had ices brought in, which we ate at the open window while the music lasted. For the rest, the ample local art-treasures were close to our door, and of these we never tired. More than once, we drove to Assisi, taking our luncheon with us, and spending many hours in the great Franciscan Sanctuary, at Santa Chiara, and other churches and convents, everywhere warmly welcomed by the monks, who, like other Italians, never weary of talking, and enjoying conversation with visitors who could talk—like my wife—in their own tongue.

I am writing of forty-three years ago. Perugia and Assisi are now familiar to hundreds of tourists, and even the town of Saint Francis has been “smartened up” to suit their tastes. But in 1866 its streets were as grass-grown even as those of Ferrara were when I first knew it, and all but deserted. I remember in the chief Piazza an old crone sitting alone and knitting in the sun. As we passed her she began singing a love-song to us, which impressed me so much that, six years later,

I thus described it, but not as happening at Perugia, in *The Human Tragedy*, when Godfrid journeyed back to Spiaggiasecura to try to have news of Olympia :

He saw a bent and withered dame advance
Slow toward the shrine, her spindle in her hand,
Singing, to mind her of the days gone by,
A sweet love-ditty, low and plaintively.

As leisurely she came, he leisured rose,
And, gazing at her well-remembered face,
Said, "Can you tell me why these doors now close,
And where is she, the guardian of this place?"
"She? she is gone; and whither, no one knows.
Spiaggiasecura sees no more her face,
Her feet no more! And I have heard them say,
'Twas one like you that drove our dear away.

"Sister of Charity they call her now.
She wears black serge about her fair young limbs,
And a white fillet, smooth across her brow,
Hides her once raven hair. Elsewhere her hymns
She chants, and Christ hath got her virgin vow.
But many an eye in Spiaggiasecura swims,
Vainly, to have her back. Ah! well-a-day!
That love and grief should drive our dear away!"

Then on she passed, with feet infirm and slow,
Plying her spindle still along the shore,
Unto her own pleased ears continuing low
The love-song of her youth that was no more.

Other excursions there were to places now as well known to the tourist as Assisi, though they too are changed in aspect; and visits to Etruscan tombs were among our interesting experiences. There was, and, I suppose, still is, a large library at Perugia, well stocked with books not of the day; and in one of these I came across a very diverting

account, when I was looking up some amusing fact or other about Pietro Perugino, on which I based a paper I sent George Lewes, then the editor of the *Fortnightly Review*, and which he accepted in a kindly letter. Not till several years later did I meet him, and George Eliot, at dinner at Lord and Lady Wolseley's, when they were living in Portman Square, and I was assigned the honour of taking down the authoress of *Adam Bede*, and Lewes was assigned to my wife. I remember the first thing she said to me, as we sate down, with her extraordinarily soft sweet voice, as she looked across the table, "An ideal poet's wife"; and, during the rest of dinner, I had the pleasure of her conversation. But not to anticipate further the years yet to come, I remember that, encouraged by Lewes's kind note about the Perugia paper, I sent him the following sonnet, which likewise he accepted with another generous acknowledgment, adding that it had given much pleasure to his wife; in some measure, no doubt, because it expressed the "Meliorism" which, midway between Pessimism and Optimism, represented her theory of the march and destiny of mankind :

Because I failed, shall I asperse the End
With scorn or doubt, my failure to excuse ;
'Gainst arduous Truth my feeble falseness use,
Like that worst foe, a vain splenetic friend ?
Deem'st thou, self-amorous fool, the High will bend
If that thy utmost stature prove too small ?
Though thou be dwarf, some other is more tall.
The End is fixed ; have faith ; the means will mend,

Failures but carve a pathway to success ;
Our force is many, so our aim be one :
The foremost drop ; on, those behind must press.
What boots my doing, so the deed be done ? . .
Let my poor body lie beneath the breach :
I clomb and fell ; who stand on me will reach.

The sonnet seems to express the inward discontent that still attended me for the failure to produce anything of consequence of the kind to which I had expected to give voice when breaking loose from the fetters of a conventional career. But, as in Rome, so at Perugia, and once again in Florence, one's education was going on.

With the close of May 1866, we left Perugia for Florence, to be Mr. Trollope's guests for the whole summer in his newly acquired villa. We found his brother Anthony had proved a true prophet, and he was spending on it all he had received for his house in the city, and not a little more. He had made, and was still making, structural changes in it of the most solid kind, and adding to its amenities both indoors and without. He was building a tower from which still more widely to survey Florence and the country round, and had completed a long loggia, up and down which we could pace in either rainy or sultry weather. One side of the villa was still open to the air, so that we entered across planks ; and some of the workmen slept there of a night, by way of protection against marauders, always pretty plentiful in Italy.

But the time was full of interest and ex-

citement, for the Piedmontese Army was being marshalled within the Quadrilateral, faced by the Austrian Forces that had been withdrawn from the duel to which Prussia had challenged Austria when Bismarck continued his far-laid plans for the unification of Germany, by means of the quarrel with her over the disposal of the Danish territory they had together seized on. From dawn to dusk we heard nothing but war-songs, only too soon to be followed by the ill-fated battles of Custozza on land and Lissa on sea, contrasting ill with Prussia's victory at Sadowa. Then tears and lamentations followed from Tuscan eyes and lips; the masons and carpenters employed at the villa exclaimed, "*I nostri prodi battuti! par impossibile!*" ("Our brave fellows beaten! It seems impossible!") The campaign was short, sharp, and decisive; and Italy, that had been made then, as since, the cat's-paw of Bismarck, had to submit to the peace imposed by Prussia, that cried "*Halt!*" in order not to press Austria too hard. Then followed one of those transactions that ever and again show Continental Governments, in regard to international politics, in their worst light. Austria, with the connivance of Prussia, handed Venetia over to Napoleon III., who passed it on to Italy. Was it wonderful that this ungracious proceeding deeply wounded the Italian people? Miss Blagden, who was still living in her villa on the Bellosguardo side of Florence, and therefore with the city between her and the Villa Trollope

at Ricorboli, fervently worshipped Napoleon III., as did her friend Elizabeth Barrett Browning in her last years ; so, whenever we used all to walk over to see her, and failed to find her at home, Trollope would notify our having called by taking down her portrait of the French Emperor and putting its face against the wall. At this time the European events to which I have just been referring interested me only politically. But, once again, they were providing, unknown to myself, further material for my Poems.

With the conclusion of the brief war of 1866, we were left free, at the Villa Trollope, to follow our own peaceful bent. When the weather was too hot, as it generally was, after the early and before the closing hours of the day, I was driven to write something or another ; so I began, and in the course of the summer months finished, another novel, much less thoughtful than the one that had secured George Meredith's admiration as Reader, and had brought me a substantial sum from Messrs. Chapman & Hall, concerning the sale of which I was to hear at the end of the twelve-month, or in the month of October. Meanwhile our days passed very happily. The household had been most agreeably added to by the advent of Miss Frances Ternan, an old friend of the Trollope family, who came to be companion to Trollope's only child, Bice, who, some years after, married my valued friend, Charles Stuart-Wortley. Miss Ternan, who became later the second wife

of our host, though thoroughly feminine in every respect, had an almost masculine mind in the sphere of serious intellectual deliberations, in which, so different in that respect from his brother Anthony, Thomas Adolphus and I also greatly rejoiced. To this gift she added other accomplishments. Almost every evening after sundown we all clomb the slopes of the *podere* to the Villa Guicciardini, where the Italian historian had written his voluminous and ponderous work. The Villa was unoccupied, so we used to rest, after the ascent, on its stone steps, and sing in unison Tuscan *stornelli*. Returning, we would sit, after our evening meal, on a marble bench in the garden of the Villa, while the fire-flies flitted over, and the *grilli* chirped in the ripening wheat. Visitors from the city below came when they would; the most welcome of all being Franz Pulszki, on whom and of whose extraordinary attainments and resonant lungs I have already expatiated.

These simple but delightful diversions nearer home were varied, when the weather grew somewhat less sultry, by excursions farther afield, for the most part to interesting towns and places well known to Trollope, into whose skilled hands as guide we gladly surrendered ourselves. One of these was to Camaldoli, previously visited by me in the Spring of 1865. We started from the station of Santa Croce for Poppi, where we should have to take to the road. Trollope, as an old traveller far and wide, always reduced his

kit, as did I, to the smallest possible proportions. But the ladies of the party accepted no such parsimonious arrangement; and I well remember his exclamation, when he saw their collective impediments on the platform of the Santa Croce Station, "Whose are all these imbecilities?" He was wondering how Antonio da Pelago would dispose of them all when we had to exchange rough country carriage for mule-back, during the final ascent to the Convent. But in Italy, where ropes, and string, and straps of leather invariably overcome such difficulties, the "imbecilities" were balanced on our mules by Antonio's practised hands.

We were warmly welcomed by the Priore of Camaldoli, the more so because Trollope had been there frequently, and was held in friendly remembrance. He and I were housed in the monastery, but the three ladies in the *Foresteria*, or guest-house reserved for those who were not admitted within the *Clausura*, and there we all supped together, the venerable Prior looking on, and attending to our needs. By the regulations of the monastery, instrumental music of every kind was barred; but being, as he said, incorrigibly fond of music, he had constructed for himself a portable harmonium, which, if we liked, he would play to us. In word we welcomed, though at the same time rather dreaded, the result, which, however, listened to with sympathetic indulgence, was better than we had anticipated. One of us told him that Bice Trollope had a lovely voice; on which the Priore

shut doors and windows carefully, and, saying that all the community was by this time abed, begged her to sing something. She at once broke into that sad song sung by the Italian conscripts in the time of the First Napoleon,

Partir, partir bisogna
Dove commanderà nostro sovrano.

The tears began to flow down the old man's cheeks, and he shortly begged her to stop, saying, "Mi monta la fantasia," meaning the song and the singing made him feel the *antiquae vestigia flammae*, the old worldly sensations, which it was his duty to suppress. And then he went on to tell us that was the very air sung to him long ago by one who, through her lack of constancy, had driven him to seek the peace of the cloister.

Even while still only in her early teens, Bice's voice was a unique one, and her ear was as faultless as it was quick. A few years later, Jenny Lind told her she had only to study and practise professionally to rival her own success and popularity. But to ask Bice to study anything seriously was useless. She had one supreme natural gift, and she lavished it freely on her friends. When the figs ripened in her father's *podere*, I would climb a fig-tree, and promise to bring her down the ripest and best, if she would sing something to me. I remember her uncle Anthony telling me he had offered a five-pound-note to each of three nieces of his if they would learn

Lycidas by heart. Two of them did so; the third, Bice, never gave it another thought. A veritable "child of Nature," she won all hearts by her graceful spontaneity. But she was another illustration of the lines of Malesherbes :

Elle était de ce monde où les plus belles choses
 Ont le pire destin,
 Et, rose, elle a vécu ce que vivent les roses,
 L'espace d'un matin.

As I have said already, she married later, in England, Charles Stuart-Wortley, and died giving birth to a daughter, also called Bice, who is now the wife of Captain "Jim" Cecil of the Guards. She used to come, as a wee child, with her father, before his second marriage, to stay with us, and inspired the following verses :

TO BEATRICE STUART-WORTLEY

ÆTAT. 2

I

Patter, patter, little feet,
 Making music quaint and sweet,
 Up the passage, down the stair;
 Patter, patter everywhere.

II

Ripple, ripple, little voice;
 When I hear you, I rejoice.
 When you cease to crow and coo,
 Then my heart grows silent too.

III

Frolic, frolic, little form,
 While the day is young and warm.
 When the shadows shun the west,
 Climb up to my knee, and rest.

IV

Slumber, slumber, little head,
Gambols o'er and night-prayers said.
I will give you in your cot
Kisses that awake you not.

V

Open, open, little lids !
Lambs are frisking in the meads ;
Blackcaps flit from stem to stem ;
Come and chirp along with them.

VI

Change not, change not, little fay ;
Still be as you are to-day.
What a loss is growth of sense,
With decrease of innocence !

VII

Something in your little ways
Wins me more than love or praise.
You have gone, and I feel still
Void I somehow cannot fill.

VIII

Yes, you leave, when you depart,
Empty cradle in my heart,
Where I sit and rock my pain,
Singing lullaby in vain.

IX

Come back, come back, little feet !
Bring again the music sweet
To the garden, to the stair ;
Patter, chatter everywhere.

Another excursion was to Orvieto, Città della Pieve, Chiusi, and Siena, delightful in every way. But the war of 1866 was shortly followed by a severe financial crisis in Austria, which was felt, in a minor degree, in other countries, and, to a

certain extent, by oneself. At the same time, I received a letter from Messrs. Chapman & Hall, in reply to one from me offering them the novel I had written during the hot summer days at the Villa, telling me that they had been much disappointed in the number of copies they had sold of *An Artist's Proof*, after the high opinion expressed of it by their Reader, and that they were not prepared to make an offer for the one I had mentioned.

Our sojourn at the Villa was coming to an end with the arrival of Autumn, and after a few weeks' stay at the Bagni di Lucca we returned to Hailey, having been in Italy for a whole year. Feeling it necessary to employ my pen profitably if possible, I wrote to the Editor of the *Standard*, who was personally unknown to me, asking if I could be of any use as a writer of leading articles. His reply was that the author of *The Season* "ought to be able to write anything," but that leading-article writing was a special craft in itself, which many gifted writers never mastered. Would I therefore, he added, select my own subject, write a leader, and send it to him? It so happened that Victor Emmanuel and Garibaldi were on the point of meeting in recently liberated Venice, and I selected that as my subject. On opening the *Standard* on the Monday following, I saw my leader occupied the first place, and was "leaded"; and this was followed by a request from the Editor that I would write five leaders a fortnight, the subjects of which would be sent to me.

This was in the days when the press, like the world generally, took things more quietly than they do now ; and I was able to write in the day-time, and despatch by train what I wrote in time to appear in the paper of the following day. Never, I suppose, did any one have so easy an entrance into Journalism, and from that hour in 1866 to 1896, when I was appointed to the Laureateship, I was uniformly treated by three successive Editors of the *Standard* with a consideration and generosity not a little, in my opinion, in excess of my services or my deserts. But I think I may say I never sought to take advantage of the privileges thus extended to me, but did all that was possible for the paper within the limits of my capacity ; always, however, giving the Editor to understand that, while such was and would be my practice, I must be allowed to consider, in all I wrote, the interests of my country and the State.

A cottage, ample enough in size and convenience for a bachelor, scarcely consorts with married life ; and, with the advent of Spring 1867, I came to the conclusion I must seek for another home. The conditions were that it must be in the country, yet not too far from London for the work I had undertaken for the *Standard*, not be unlovely to the eye, and have seclusion and charm. The search was long, tedious, and disappointing. But perseverance and knowing one's own mind at length were rewarded—a seven, fourteen, or twenty-one years' lease of Swinford being the

result. The following is an account of the house we took :

“Swinfort (or Swinford, which is its more proper name), lying in the southern part of it (*i.e.* Hothfield parish), near the river Stour, probably took its name from some ford in former times over it here. However that be, it had formerly proprietors who took their name from it, but they were never of any eminence, nor can I discover when they became extinct here ; only, that in King Henry V.’s reign it was in the possession of Bridges, descended from John-atte-Brigg, one of those eminent persons whose effigies, kneeling and habited in armour, was painted in the window often mentioned above in Great Chart Church : and in this family the manor of Swinford continued till the latter end of King James I.’s reign, when it passed by sale from one of them to Sir Nicholas Tufton, Knight and Baronet, afterwards created Earl of Thanet (*v. Philipott*, p. 194), whose son John, Earl of Thanet, before the 20th year of that reign, exchanged it for other lands which lay more convenient to him, with his near neighbour, Nicholas Toke, of Godinton, Esq., in which family and name it has continued down in like manner as that seat to John Toke, now of Godinton, Esq., the present owner of it (1790). A Court Baron is held at this Manor.

John, Earl of Thanet, held a Court for this Manor *Anno* 9, Charles I.” — Extract from Hasted’s *History of Kent*, edition 1790.

The discovery of it and what followed are described in *The Garden that I Love*, a work too well known and too generously appreciated for the narrative to be reproduced here. I had passed many happy days at Hailey, and left it not without some regret. But I had done everything foolish and shortsighted in connection with it that was possible, and was a heavy loser when leaving it.

The many friends who have honoured us by visits to Swinford Old Manor during the last thirty years, not having seen it in the previous twelve, have no conception of what it then was. Where there are now five gables, reverently copied from the older ones, there were then but three; and where the Garden now fronts and surrounds it, garden there was none. But there was a park before and a park behind it, and noble timber framed it on every side. What exists has been the gradual growth of forty-two years, by our own design and under our own supervision. But progress was slow at first, because of limited means and experience. Indeed, I do not think much was done during the first five years of our long lease under a most amiable landlord, who left me absolute liberty to alter and transform as I would.

CHAPTER IX

Begin writing for *Standard*—Leave Hailey—Swinford Old Manor—To Rome in 1869—The Oecumenical Council—Arrival of Empress of Austria—Hunting in the Campagna—Funeral of ex-Grand Duke of Tuscany—Dr. Newman and the *Standard*—Return to England, 1870.

WE left England again in the autumn of 1869 to attend the Oecumenical Council in Rome, which I was commissioned to write upon for the *Standard*. We remained there from the end of November till the end of February 1870, when we returned home, as I saw no prospect of the end of the Council.

THE OECUMENICAL COUNCIL

THE OPENING OF THE COUNCIL.

ROME, *December 8.*

I have this moment returned from St. Peter's, after witnessing from a highly advantageous position the imposing ceremonies which this morning inaugurated the First Oecumenical Council of the Vatican. From the earliest dawn Rome resounded to the roar of artillery; and before the earliest dawn tens of thousands of the inhabitants of the Eternal City, and scarcely fewer tens of thousands of visitors brought thither from all, and some the remotest, parts of the earth, were flocking, in carriages where they could, and on foot where they could not, to the grand, massive, and

enormous pile which Catholic piety and Papal ambition have raised over the tomb of the Apostle here deemed head and chief of all the rest. I thought it my duty to be there sometimes, that I might mark the arrival of the crowd, as well as be present at the later ceremonies. Accordingly it was but little after half-past five when I rose, and even then the pavement below echoed to the roll of continual carriages. I looked out. It was as dark as a wolf's mouth; but I could descry the slippery stones, and I could hear the constant patter of a steady shower. As the light of day drew nearer I could see that it was raining in torrents, and I compassionated the thousands of poor creatures whom devotion would be sure under any circumstances to draw to St. Peter's, but whom all the devotion in the world would not keep from getting half wet through, having their holiday clothes spoiled, or perhaps catching a cold to last them for weeks. The Madonna, to whom they had been praying constantly and with such remarkable fervour during the last nine days, had evidently not been pleased to reward them with one of her proverbial bright suns and blue skies. True piety, however, is never without a satisfactory explanation for celestial—or should I say terrestrial?—phenomena; and when I remarked to a fervent Catholic that on this, the Feast Day of the Immaculate Conception, and the opening of the great Council, we might have been indulged with dry streets underfoot and a clear heaven overhead, I was answered that it was an opportunity for the display of greater devotion for those who, rain or no rain, were determined to hear Mass in St. Peter's.

It was about a quarter before seven when I started, and I soon found, by the carriage I was in not falling into *queue* and by the crowd of empty carriages I met, that the vast majority who could drive to their destination had long since reached it. It is no exaggeration to say that some of the streets were turned into streams, and at one point the horses had to wade through a pool of water as high as their knees. The rain seemed to redouble as I reached the grand square enclosed by the famous colonnades of Bernini. A long flight of broad steps leads from it to the church, and

there was nothing else for it but to traverse this portion of the journey on foot. The square was crammed with carriages, and when I reached the atrium I found the lines already formed, and that a vast host of people had already taken their places at this point as a favourable one for seeing the procession pass.

On entering the church, about a quarter-past seven, I perceived that the Zouaves were just on the point of being drawn up in two parallel single lines down the whole of the nave, so as to keep the ground free for the procession. They had considerable difficulty in performing this task. To begin with, they did not shoulder each other as one would have expected them to do; and many of them were mere boys, and being without muskets or shakos, they did not impress the crowd as a display of military is accustomed to impress it. Moreover, they were too patient and long-suffering. It was a different matter, I well remember, when the French were here. The butt-end of a musket on your toe was the mildest penalty inflicted for the slightest attempt to break the line, and as for hoping to move it one half-inch you might as well have tried to move Caucasus. These poor lads were much too easy-going. Some of them were rather wet from the rain, though they had come from barracks hard by—barracks which occupy part of the large building in which the famous Inquisition still has its offices. "One will soon be dry here," I heard one of them say to a comrade, and I can quite believe that with the huge crowd at their back, which kept continually pressing on them, they were warm enough. The crush in some places must have been terrific; and a friend of mine told me, as he was leaving St. Peter's, that he was wet through to his overcoat from perspiration. I quite believed him, for I saw many who, to judge from their hot, red, broiled faces, must have been in a similar plight. The French priests were conspicuously vigorous in their determination to see everything that was to be seen. I heard of one who, being remonstrated with by a lady on whose shoulders he seemed to contemplate placing himself, answered with admirable frankness, "*Mais je suis venu de si loin pour voir le Saint Pere.*"

I should think that by eight o'clock everybody who had not a special place allotted to him had taken up his position, and by half-past eight even those who enjoyed special privileges were in the full enjoyment of them. Ladies were worse provided for than usual. Ordinarily there are tiers of reserved seats prepared for the devout sex, but this morning what few benches there were were all on one level, so that I fear some of them must have seen but ill. The main entrance to the Council from the body of the church was open from the earliest hour, and as it is of vast size, the whole of the *Aula Conciliaris* was exposed to view. There are tribunes in it, set apart for crowned heads and their suites, and also for the diplomatic corps. The former was full at a comparatively early hour, the Empress of Austria occupying a conspicuous position. Whilst I was yet looking about me I was surprised to see the ex-Grand Duke of Tuscany approach the open space in front of the Confessional, and seat himself on a bench placed there for the officers on duty. He was in the full-dress uniform belonging to him by virtue of his rank in the Austrian army, and he looked for all the world as he used to look in the days when he ruled with mild sceptre over fair Tuscany. He carried his head in the old well-known fashion, hanging it down as if in an attitude of constant obeisance; and altogether he still wears the aspect which used to cause his subjects to speak of him familiarly as *Il Babbo*, or, *Anglice*, the father or "governor." By his side was the duchess, dressed very simply and in black. As I expected, he was soon summoned to go up higher, and to take his place among his equals. Scarcely had he done so when the handsome body of *Guardia Palatina*, equivalent to a sort of special national guard, marched up the nave, and replaced the Zouaves at its upper end. Every fresh arrival, whether military or civilian, seemed to make the crowd more restless; and I could see that those on duty had a hard time of it to keep the line clear for the now impatiently expected procession, for it was now past nine.

According to the printed regulations, the arrival of the Holy Father among the prelates collected together in the

Upper Atrium was fixed for half-past eight; but it must have been considerably after that hour when he made his appearance, unless, indeed, the getting into due order so many ecclesiastics was the cause of the delay. It was fully half-past nine before the Papal choir was heard in the distance, singing with sonorous voices, admirably harmonised, the first verse of the *Veni Creator*. We then knew that the procession had started. I was in the church itself, and, therefore, did not see the Pope borne in the *Sedia Gestatoria*—a spectacle I have witnessed on other occasions. I presume, however, that in accordance with the arrangements laid down he was carried in it till he reached the doors of St. Peter. But a good half-hour, I should say, elapsed between the moment when the *Veni Creator* first broke forth and his Holiness passed before me; for a thousand people at least preceded him. I told you, in a former letter, that a body of box and myrtle spreaders would open the procession; but that part of the ceremony, in St. Peter's itself, at least, was omitted. The Papal choir, among whom I recognised Mustapha, looking as young as ever and somewhat thinner, led the way. Then came a number of consistorial advocates, followed by the chamberlains of the Court, public and private. In their wake, robed in heavy copes of white and gold, and bearing their mitres in their hands, came, two and two, a long array of bishops, abbots, archbishops, and patriarchs from all quarters of the globe. I began by counting them, but I found the task too tedious, and, moreover, it distracted my attention from their features and costumes. Less than six hundred there could not well be, all counted; and it is possible that they were more numerous still. Twenty-five minutes was the time it took for them to pass along.

The splendour of the robes and mitres—the latter more in the shape of the Pope's own tiara—borne by some of the Oriental prelates and abbots, is beyond all description; and the appearance even of their chaplains cast into the shade that of any European bishop. Nor must it be supposed that they are Europeans sent to do duty among the heathen. Their features, complexion, and bearing all

stamped them of the true Oriental type. They had come from uttermost Ind, some of them, to pay homage to the successor of St. Peter. There was no corner of the habitable world which had not its representative. Yet, with happy foresight, and perhaps with a view to mark that the Church knows no distinction of race, land, or tongue, these gorgeous Orientals were not massed together, but flashed upon one with their dazzling robes at due intervals. I am bound to say that, taking the Roman Catholic Episcopate in their entirety as I saw them this morning, they form a handsome, impressive body of men, and the number of them who are in the full vigour of life is remarkable.

There was no more noticeable countenance among them all than that of him who was once an archdeacon, honoured and beloved in the Anglican Communion, and is now a shining light in the Roman Catholic Church, and archbishop of the important See of Westminster. I looked for his spare form and keen ascetic face, and at last I saw it coming up the nave. Side by side with Dr. Manning walked Monseigneur de Merode; and as I saw these two ardent, uncompromising militant prelates together, I thought that they were well bracketed. When Dr. Manning had passed, I knew that there would be but few more archbishops to follow—for a high place of honour is always assigned him at Rome, and at Rome who comes last is first in estimation. I proved right in my speculations; for close at his heels came the College of Cardinals. The youngest and perhaps the most noticeable among them all was Cardinal Buonaparte, who owes his hat to an all-potent cousin. No, not the most noticeable; the most noticeable had yet to come, and he was here. But scarcely had the eye fallen on the unmistakable figure of Antonelli than the front rank of the dense crowd dropped on its knees—the hinder ranks could not, they were so closely packed—for Pius the Ninth, his face radiant with supreme happiness, was dealing right and left his Pontifical blessing.

Never have I seen him look better; never have I seen him wear an aspect of such joyful content. It would be

wonderful were it otherwise. It was a proud moment for him, when he thus brought up the long train of almost all the prelates of a Church that boasts to be universal, and may be pardoned for the ambitious vaunt, even though it be scarcely accurate. Two hundred millions of subjects constitute an enormous empire, and over no less than two hundred million souls does Pius the Ninth reign supreme. I saw him arrive yesterday at the Santi Apostoli, to give the benediction at the end of the Novena. I saw him leave half an hour later, and never in my life have I seen a sovereign receive such a welcome as was offered him both coming and going. The square was crammed to suffocation. All the windows of all the houses were filled with faces. Men had contrived to clamber up to pillars and lofty railings, from which I could not conceive how they would ever get down again. Never again can I say that only Englishmen know how to cheer. The cries were multifarious, but they were all of the most ardent and, to my impartial ears, some of them were of ludicrous loyalty.

Well, therefore, as I say, may the Pope be filled with delight, and I should have been glad if I could have followed him even to the throne prepared for him in the hall of the Council. In the far distance he was still visible. Below him were the cardinals, and to his right and to his left, long tier above long tier, were between six and seven hundred prelates. Heads that have worn crowns, and heads that still wear them, were looking down upon the imposing scene; and outside the Council, but clustered round the Confessional, and well within his gaze, were thousands of the faithful. After the procession had passed into the Council Hall, the line, long so jealously kept in the nave, was broken, and those who had been on each side of it strove to get as near to that point as possible. But every inch of available ground was already occupied, and those persons who had chosen the atrium as a favourable place for seeing the procession, though they now came streaming in, never got anywhere near to the high altar.

It was not here, however, that Mass was celebrated this morning. It was sung by Cardinal Patrizi at the

temporary altar erected in the centre of the Council Hall itself, the doors remaining open all the while. At the close of Mass the Pope received the homage of all the Fathers of the Council, and this solemn ceremony concluded, he bestowed upon them and upon all present his benediction, holding in his hand his pastoral staff, surmounted by the Cross, intended to typify his double and universal jurisdiction. Suddenly a voice was heard—"Exeunt omnes qui locum non habent in Concilio." This was a notification that, for the outer world, all that is to be seen of the Council itself has been seen. What it knows in future it must know by hearsay. Already thousands of people, despairing of seeing anything at all after the procession had once passed, had quitted the church; and now the remaining thousands poured out into the Piazza, where the rain was still heavily falling, and distracted footmen were running up and down in search of distracted masters. I had the luck to get away in good time; or else even this hastily written letter could not have been dispatched the day it is dated, as I now hope it will be. Even as I bring it to a close, I hear that the entire concourse from this part of the town has not yet returned from St. Peter's.

ROME, *December 9.*

The wish to send you on the day itself an account of the earlier portion of the ceremonies with which the opening of the Oecumenical Council was yesterday attended obliged me to allude only in the slightest manner to those with which the solemn functions in St. Peter's were brought to a close. I do not think I can add anything to my description of the procession, nor indeed respecting any of those matters into which I yesterday entered with full detail. No man can be ubiquitous; but I have failed to gather from other witnesses anything more than I myself saw and heard. I will, therefore, resume my description where, as far as particularity is concerned, it broke off out of deference to the exigencies of the Roman post.

When all the Fathers had taken their allotted seats in the Council, the cardinals ranged themselves in front of

the throne, and the Pope had ascended it, Cardinal Patrizi commenced the celebration of High Mass. Not, however, at the high altar, but at the temporary one erected in the body of the Council. Its exact position I described in a former letter. The Papal choir was present, and in full force, and the singing at certain points was of a very high order of merit. Many of your readers doubtless are aware, from their occasional visits to Roman Catholic churches, that during what is called the "elevation"—that is to say, the moment at which the act of transubstantiation is supposed to take place—a bell is rung six times, synchronously with genuflections and raising of the Host and the chalice by the officiating priest. It is the same part of the Mass at which, on Easter Sunday, when the Pope himself officiates, the soul-entrancing silver trumpets are blown. When, however, the Pope is present, but does not celebrate the Mass in person, neither trumpets are blown nor bell rung, and the elevation—the whole congregation being on their knees and with heads bent low—takes place in solemn silence.

So was it yesterday, and through the vast expanse of St. Peter's every voice, even to a whisper, was hushed. Suddenly there was a scrambling up from their knees of thousands of worshippers, and the choir broke forth in one of the most ravishing strains to which the human ear ever listened. It was the *Benedictus*, followed by the "Hosannah," which is sung in St. Peter's on Palm Sunday; and never was it given more beautifully than yesterday. From that point to the "Blessing," which comes immediately before the "last Gospel" or concluding words of the Mass, there was nothing that calls for remark; the ceremonies being precisely what they are on other occasions—the only peculiarity being, as I have said, that they were all carried on in the hall of the Council, instead of at the high altar of St. Peter's.

Your readers, however, will be pleased to bear in mind what I explained so fully yesterday, that the doors which lead from the body of the church into the Council are so immense, that when they are open, as they were yesterday, the whole assembly is perfectly visible to those outside, or to such of

them at least who are so placed that on an ordinary occasion they could command with their gaze the north transept. At the moment at which the officiating priest turns from the altar, before reciting the "last Gospel"—*i.e.* the opening chapter of the Gospel according to St. John—and blesses the congregation, the Pope rose from the throne and himself bestowed the Benediction. A wooden pulpit was then carried into the Council, and a Carmelite friar, selected by the Pope for the occasion, delivered what is called the opening sermon, which lasted for the better part of an hour. At its close Cardinal Patrizi recited the passage from St. John I have already alluded to, and Mass was over. Practically, it was concluded about half-past eleven, but the introduction of the sermon at the point I have named caused it to end, strictly speaking, at half-past twelve.

Now it was that the special ceremonies of the inauguration of the Council, interrupted by the Mass, were resumed. A large reading desk, made in the form of a throne, was placed upon the altar, and Monsignor Fessler, secretary of the Council, placed upon it the Sacred Scriptures. Upon the altar were likewise laid out the trappings and insignia of the Pope, in his character of Sovereign Pontiff. In these he was arrayed by a cardinal-deacon, whilst he read the Psalms usually recited by a minister of the altar when donning the sacred vestments. As soon as the Pope had put on the pallium, there commenced a ceremony, performed in dumb show, but which lasted an entire hour, and was the most important, if the most tedious, ceremony of all. It consisted in every single primate, patriarch, archbishop, bishop, and mitred abbot who was present, and who proposes to take part in the Council, passing before the Holy Father in an attitude of obeisance and kissing his ring. As bishops they are exempted from kissing his toe—a luxury reserved for the laity and lower clergy. I am not aware that there is any precedent for this performance; and as several Councils have been opened even without the presence of the Pope, it certainly is not one of regular occurrence. It seemed, however, to be submitted to with affectionate alacrity by the entire assembly.

In my letter of yesterday I roughly calculated that the prelates who filed before me, two and two, in the course of the procession must have numbered between six and seven hundred. I have just heard that the exact number computed was six hundred and eighty; and if this figure be correct, Pope Pius the Ninth yesterday "received the obedience"—for that is the correct technical name of the ceremony I am describing—of six hundred and eighty members of the Catholic Episcopate. It may confidently be said that no Pontiff ever received such abundant homage in one day; and if the authority of the Bishop of Rome may be estimated from a fact of this nature, it is pretty clear that in the spiritual line it is not on the decline.

As soon as this long, but highly suggestive, ceremony was concluded, the Pope read a prayer aloud, and then proceeded to read to the Council a Latin allocution. Though his voice is remarkably powerful for a man of his age, it may be doubted whether he was heard throughout even by all the bishops in the Council Hall. Beyond it nothing but the sound of his voice could be caught. You will probably suspect, from the prosynodal allocution pronounced by him last week, and translated by me a few days ago for the benefit of your readers, that it contained nothing very striking. When it is published, or as soon as I get hold of a copy, which I very likely shall do in the course of this afternoon, we shall see what it is like. For one thing, it will be a good length. You must not suppose that it is the composition of the Holy Father himself. No doubt he gives instructions, and when they are carried out, he affirms that the allocution contains his sentiments exactly; but all documents are, I believe, written by the secretary of Papal briefs.

As soon as the reading of the allocution was concluded, the Litany of the Saints, a very long litany, indeed, was intoned; and at its termination the Holy Father pronounced the three solemn Benedictions, *super Synodum*, as they are called. Whilst his right hand was engaged in this act of blessing, in his left he held the Pontifical baton surmounted by a cross, typical of his supreme authority temporal and spiritual. Then came a succession of prayers, followed by the Gospel appointed to be

read during this the first sitting of the Council. Then came other prayers, at the end of which the master of ceremonies pronounced the brief formula I recorded yesterday, summoning all those who had no right to be present at the Council to depart.

It was already half-past two, and the greater portion of the crowd in St. Peter's had some time ago disappeared. Hundreds of others departed at this stage; but, contrary to expectation, the doors of the Council were not closed. The secretary to the Council mounted the pulpit and read the Papal decree by which the Council had been summoned, and the Fathers were invited to express their opinion upon its propriety and opportuneness. Takers and counters of votes had been appointed and were there ready to receive the suffrages of the assembled Episcopate. But a loud shout of assent burst from them, which in all probability—though here I am only guessing, for it was impossible for anybody to catch the word with any certainty—consisted of "*utique*," pronounced by each Father present. The first stage of the Oecumenical Council was, therefore, literally passed by acclamation. Whether every fresh stage will be got through with like easy unanimity remains to be seen.

Thus assured of the wisdom of the brief by which he summoned the entire Church to the First Council of the Vatican, the Pope, in a loud, clear voice intoned the first words of the *Te Deum*, which was immediately taken up by the Papal choir. Every alternate verse, however, was sung by the entire body of the faithful; and it would be impossible to describe the effect produced by the changes from the delicate, exquisitely harmonised voices of the trained choristers, to the loud, full, surging, uniform body of sound that was rolled out from the tens of thousands that still lingered in the church. When the last verse of the glorious Hymn of Thanksgiving was concluded, the Pope read the prayers which come at the end of it, and the ceremony was over. The Pope returned to the Vatican, through the private approaches to the Council; but the bishops returned into the church and scattered themselves among the various chapels appointed, as I have described previously, to be their robing-rooms.

It was now three o'clock, and when it is considered that the Pope, a man of seventy-seven years of age, had been taking part in these fatiguing functions from half-past eight, or during the uninterrupted space of six hours and a half, I think we cannot withhold our admiration at his endurance. No doubt he was buoyed up by a mixed feeling of piety and pride; for certainly never has it fallen to the lot of an occupant of the Papal Chair to open a Council with such splendour and fulness of religious ceremony and under such promising auspices. Thousands of people, as I have said, confessed themselves worn out, and left long before the solemnities were over. The more knowing left and returned, 'escaping most of the "obedience" of the bishops and the sermon of the Carmelite friar. Many, however, never stirred from the places they had taken up at seven o'clock; and, doubtless, they will long remember the 8th day of December 1869.

I am informed that the Council will not meet again till Tuesday, and I have no doubt that many of the bishops will be glad of a respite after their long journeys and their fatigues of yesterday. I likewise hear of a report, which, however, I mention with all reserve, that some of the bishops intend to propose that the Council should on no account be brought to a close when its immediate business has been transacted; but that it should then be prorogued till after the death of Pius IX. The object of this is that the episcopate may have some voice in the election of the next Pope, so that the choice should not be kept exclusively in the hands of the Sacred College, so largely composed as it is of Italians. Of course, the result of such a vote, if arrived at, might be that the Council would nominally last for many years; for to look at Pius IX. one would conclude that he may live for a considerable time to come, in spite of the common Roman Catholic fear that this must be the last year of his pontificate in consequence of no Pope, St. Peter not excepted, having reigned for a full quarter of a century.

Length of time, however, would be no valid objection to the prolongation of the Council till after the demise of the present Pontiff. The Council of Trent lasted, off and on,

for eighteen years; and both the Councils of Basle and Constance endured for the best part of five years. The proposal would certainly be a bold one, and could proceed only from ~~some~~ prelate, or body of prelates, distinctly opposed to Ultramontane pretensions. The writing down of the last phrase reminds me to say that the attitude assumed by the *Weekly Register* (one of the organs of Roman Catholic opinion in England), in the matter of the Pastoral Letter of the Bishop of Orleans, has given great satisfaction to many English Roman Catholics in Rome; among whom, however, I fear I cannot number Archbishop Manning.

In spite of the rain, which continued almost uninterruptedly the whole of yesterday evening, there were extensive illuminations throughout the Eternal City, the most conspicuous illuminated object being, from its height and the multitude of its lamps, the Tower of the Capitol. Bands of military music were to have played all the evening in the Piazza Colonna, but the bad weather baffled the excellent intentions of the authorities. For the same reason a military review, which was to have taken place this afternoon in the Borghese Gardens, has been postponed. The weather is abominably bad; but it is the same all over Europe. One eminent sufferer by it has been Mr. Odo Russell, who, with his family, has just returned to Rome, to the great satisfaction of all English residents. His journey hither was a veritable martyrdom.

ROME, December 10.

Though I have not yet been able to read the whole of the Allocution delivered by the Pope to the Council on the day of the opening, I have had an opportunity of glancing my eye hurriedly through it, and even on that hasty scrutiny I am justified in saying that it is a composition precisely of the nature I expected. If I were to say that there is absolutely nothing in it, I should not be exaggerating in the smallest degree. Queen's Speeches are proverbially devoid of interest and novelty, but they are exciting and full of surprises compared with the stereotyped discourses of Pius IX. Of course, there is the everlasting string of grievances against

kings, governments, and peoples, all equally enemies of religion and of the Holy See. Of course, there is the same confident assurance of the immutable relations between the gates of hell and the Vatican Rock. And, of course, after all but cursing nearly everybody all round who is not a meek and submissive son of the Church, prayers are put up for them, and their conversion is anticipated with parental piety.

Not one gleam of wisdom, not one scintilla of evidence to show that Rome is alive to the real troubles and perplexities of the age, appears in this long polysyllabled discourse; and if the Fathers of the Council are not imbued with wider views and more embracing scopes than those which are entertained by their Head, their assembling in this city is not likely to be of much avail to Christendom. Truly, many a busy parliamentary session has opened with a Speech equally meaningless, but the Pope, even in his spiritual domain, is scarcely a constitutional Sovereign, and might have ventured upon saying a striking thing or two without being thought to have invaded the rights of any one. Perhaps, however, he feared to lead the way into the path of originality, and as nothing can less be desired here than that the bishops should hold unaccustomed ecclesiastical language, his Holiness thought it better that he should set them the example by adhering as closely as possible to the common forms which he has reproduced over and over again ever since 1859.

Obedience and submission are the two favourite words in the Roman vocabulary; and an instance at once remarkable and amusing has just been furnished, on the occasion of the Council, by the ablest Roman Catholic daily journal in the Peninsula. I speak of the *Unità Cattolica*. It is not published here, but at Turin, but it has a considerable sale in the Eternal City. It appeared the day before yesterday in what I imagine your readers will think a somewhat singular guise for a newspaper. The whole of the front sheet was taken up by a formal and perfectly spontaneous act of "humble submission on the part of the directors to Pope Pius IX. and the Father of the sacred Vatican Council." The words in which this tribute of self-annihilation was conveyed were given both in Latin and Italian; in Latin, I

presume, for the Pope and the Fathers, and in Italian for the vulgar. A more comical document I think I never read. It commences with the declaration that though the present Council is free from most of these interferences on the part of governments to which former Councils were exposed, still it has one torment to put up with of no trivial kind. This torment is journalism! Then follows a paragraph in which this pernicious institution is held up to execration. As some slight reparation for its iniquities the directors of the *Unità Cattolica* express their willingness to condemn and withdraw any single sentence that has ever appeared in the journal if it be disapproved either in substance or in form by the Pope and the Council. They have meant well, they say, but they are fully conscious of their own imbecility—I am quoting their exact language—and, therefore, pray to be enlightened, guided, and commanded; and so on. All this is intended as an example to true children of the Church. The journal in question is one of very great influence, and is the newspaper for which Cavour always used to ask first when he arrived at the café which was his habitual resort in Turin down to his last illness.

In the hurried letter I wrote you on the 8th I said that the Roman Catholic episcopate, as seen in St. Peter's on that day, formed on the whole a good-looking body of men; but if you asked me if they impressed me with the notion that largeness of thought or independence of character was stamped on their features, I shall be compelled to answer in the negative. I may be wrong; but I doubt if there was a real Man among them all.

I have just a few items to add to my former letters, and one or two trivial errors to correct. The word uttered by the bishops when they wished to signify their assent to the opening of the Council was *Placet*. Their second meeting will not be, as I was informed, next Tuesday, but to-day. This, however, will not be what is called a General Assembly, but one held in a smaller apartment of the Vatican, more suited for every-day business. I am told that the Council Hall itself is not remarkable for its acoustic properties; and it is altogether too large for any but the most solemn

occasions. Moreover, a great deal of the work of the Council will be done in what we should call Committees, and what are here called Congregations. These Congregations are named, like our parliamentary committees, by the August Body itself; and I conclude that the result of their deliberations will ultimately be laid before the Council, and their conclusions affirmed or negatived by the full vote of the latter.

The next General Session is fixed for the 6th of January, the Feast of the Epiphany, on which day there will again, doubtless, take place a solemn function in St. Peter's. The exact list of persons of princely distinction present on the 8th is as follows:—The Empress of Austria, the ex-King and Queen of Naples, the Queen of Würtemberg, the ex-Duke and Duchess of Parma, the ex-Grand Duke and Duchess of Tuscany, the Count and Countess di Girgenti, the Count and Countess di Caserta, the Count and Countess di Trapani.

To-day is another great day in Rome. It is the Feast of Our Lady of Loreto. Grand High Mass is sung in several churches, and especially in one dedicated to the Madonna, under that title, in the Piazza where stands the magnificent column of Trajan. It belongs to the corporation of bakers, and this worthy body figured conspicuously in this morning's ceremonies. No more extraordinary fact has every existed than the acceptance of the fable which is associated with the name of Loreto by the entire Church, and by the whole body of its adherents. The story runs that in the year 1291 a house was found at a place called Tersatto, on the Dalmatian coast, which, as far as the inhabitants of the spot were concerned, was not builded of human hands. Like the gourd in the Arabian story, or the bean-stalk in our English nursery stories, it seemed to them to be the growth of a single night. But an explanation was soon forthcoming. An angel had appeared to a holy old man in his dreams, and informed him that the strange building was nothing less than the Santa Casa, or holy house of the Virgin, in which she had dwelt at Nazareth, over which the Empress Helena had formerly raised a magnificent Basilica, at which such illustrious

pilgrims as the kingly St. Louis and the humble St. Francis had prayed, but which was now daily exposed to the ruthlessness of the Saracens.

•But the Santa Casa, having once acquired habits of flitting, could not be persuaded to remain where it had first pitched itself after so long a journey. On the night of the 9th of December 1294, or only three years after its arrival at Tersatto, it moved to the opposite or Italian side of the Adriatic, and fixed itself for a time at a spot near Recanati, called Laureta. Hence the name Loreto. But the unquiet spirit of roaming still possessed it. Eight months later it moved a mile inland, and established itself on the estate of two brothers whose name I cannot recall. But just as it had been induced to leave Laureta, because of robbers, so four months later did fraternal discord, arising out of the vast wealth which pious pilgrims placed at the disposal of the brothers, again compel it to shift its quarters.

This time, however, its journey was a short one. It moved but an arrow's flight, and never moved again. It could not have been on account of the reception it met with here that it no longer cared to move on; for it was not till 1300 that even so much as a wall was built round it, with a rough portico attached for the shelter of pilgrims; and not till thirty-one years later again did the inhabitants of Recanati erect a church to enclose the precious gift. Not a trace, even in engravings, exists of their piety; for a hundred and forty years later Paul II. ordered the construction of a more splendid edifice in its stead. It could not have been very durably constructed, for in 1526 Clement VIII. found that it required complete renovation. Sangallo was the principal architect; but it was not till during the brief but important reign of Sixtus V. that the building, as we now see it, was completed.

If any one wonders that in the nineteenth century I should trouble myself to record afresh a preposterous fable, I would remind them that it is a fable believed in by two hundred millions of Christians; that the Litany of Loreto is one of the most popular and frequently repeated prayers

of the Roman Catholic Church; that prodigal piety has at various times conferred on the Santa Casa and its precincts an amount of wealth perhaps unequalled in religious annals; and that of all spots upon earth—if, perhaps, ~~we~~ except Mecca—it has long been, and still is, most visited by pilgrims. When the commissaries of the French Directory entered it in 1797 their greedy eyes were met with treasure computed to be worth five million scudi, or more than a million and a quarter sterling. Pius VI. had removed to Terracina and to the Castle of St. Angelo all that he had time to carry away, but the plunder sent to Paris was enormous. The famous image of the Madonna, attributed—as all such are—to St. Luke, was entered in the Catalogue of the Paris Museum as “A figure in Oriental wood of the Egypto-Judaic school.” When Napoleon became First Consul, Pius VII. obtained its restoration; but the plunder borne off by the Directory was beyond recovery.

The piety, however, even of this century, has almost restored to the Santa Casa its pristine splendour. In many instances gilded wood has had to be substituted for the former coatings of solid gold set with gems; and the twenty golden and sixty silver lamps which formerly burned incessantly in the sacred shrine are now represented by lamps of silver gilt. The place yet glitters with diamonds, many of them the gift of crowned heads known to a generation only just passed away; and Rome has been constantly lavishing what wealth she had to spare in repairing the outrages inflicted by the republican emancipators of mankind. The new kingdom of Italy, that has dealt so roughly with most monastic establishments, and filled her empty exchequer with their wealth, has hesitated as yet to touch Loreto. Pilgrims still visit it from all parts of the world, one of them being Victor Emmanuel himself, who, on the occasion of his first visit, after Loreto became part of his dominions, left 50,000 lire to be spent in its further embellishment.

The testimony in support of the incident on which has been raised all this wonderful superstructure of splendour and devotion is of the most trivial kind. Dante, Brunetto

Latini, Villani, and the biographers of Boniface VIII., all of whom were living at the time that the Santa Casa is said to have first made its appearance in Italy, are silent on the subject; and it would have been the special business of all these to have alluded to it. St. Antoninus, who flourished in the fifteenth century, and who in his *Historia Mundi* loves to collate all such stories, has not a single word upon the subject; and in the *Dittamondo* of Farinata Degli Uberti, which was written about the middle of the fourteenth century, and in one part which is especially dedicated to a description of Ancona and its neighbourhood, there is not a syllable about Loreto.

Clement VII. sent commissioners to Nazareth, who brought away stones which they said exactly corresponded with those of which the Santa Casa at Loreto is built; and it is affirmed that the excavation made under the superintendence of Benedict XIV. showed that its walls rested on the ground without any preparatory foundations. Saussure, on the other hand, declares that it is built of a red limestone, resembling some which may be seen between Ancona and Rimini—the same, in fact, as that of which the Augustan Arch at Fano consists. Dean Stanley, too, gives strong evidence against the story. But of what avail is evidence in such matters? What some call devotion, and others superstition, wants no such props. Our Lady of Loreto is honoured this day by millions who never doubt the truth of the pious fable I have narrated. And as the Council is under the special patronage of the Madonna, and everything which exalts her exalts Pius the Ninth, unusual efforts are being made to-day to celebrate this her festival.

ROME, December 11.

I cannot think you would care to have laid before you a full translation of the Pope's allocution, referred to by me yesterday, and pronounced by him at the opening of the Council. It is a lengthy document, whose merits are by no means in proportion to its bulk. I will content myself, therefore, with giving you a *résumé* of its contents, dwelling

with more particularity on those passages which would seem to carry an air of unusual importance.

As might be expected, the Pope commenced his discourse by congratulating himself and the assembled Fathers on the fact of the Council, against which so many dismal prophecies had been directed, taking place at the appointed time, and in the appointed city. He declared that his heart exulted in the Lord, and was filled with incredible consolation at beholding such an unprecedented concourse of bishops, and more especially because the day of their first meeting fell on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. He then proceeded to state the reasons for which the Council had been called; but they were stated far too vaguely to give the outer world more than a very faint intimation of what will be its business.

They were assembled, he said, to render testimony to the Word of God and to Jesus Christ; to point, in union with Rome, the path of God and of truth; and—here came a closer application of his language—to pass judgment together with him, and enlightened by the Holy Spirit, upon the opposition made to them in the false name of science. Therefore, most of all at such a time, he continued, when the earth truly moans, and is afflicted by reason of the dwellers thereon, should they fold their arms around Sion, and embrace it, and speak loudly from its towers. Then came a long and scarcely new description of the “old enemy of the human race,” under whose patronage is spread the vast conspiracy of the impious, strong in its union, powerful by reason of its wealth, furnished with all sorts of means, and availing itself of the name of liberty in order to screen its malice, which is directed with lamentable wickedness against the Holy Church of Christ. A terrible picture was then drawn of the machinations of these conspirators, which I need not reproduce; the conclusion being that they are of so tremendous a nature that, could the Church ever be ruined, its ruin must have happened in our time. But the Church, said the allocution, is more powerful than Heaven itself. “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away.” “And what were the words,” asked the Pontiff, “that should not pass away?” I conclude you

are prepared for the reply. "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

After a few more sentences devoted to reprobating the enemies of the Holy See—for upon this point no amount of words ever seems to satisfy the Holy Father—he went on to say that he, as vicar of the Eternal Shepherd, should more than all others be inflamed with the zeal of the house of God; and it was precisely for that reason that he thought it his duty to enter the arena and adopt those means which seemed most opportune and best calculated to repair the numerous evils that afflict the Church. He had, he said, frequently turned over in his mind the words of Isaiah, "Take counsel, gather counsel," and thinking that such a remedy was many times adopted by his predecessors in moments of peril to Christianity, he had at length, after long prayers, and after having obtained the opinion of his venerable brethren, the Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church, and collected the suffrages of many bishops, resolved to gather together in St. Peter's all those whom he saw before him, whom he characterised as the salt of the earth, the guardians and shepherds of the flocks of the Lord.

He then for a moment waxed almost eloquent. The proofs of affection, he said, which were being showered on him were so abundant that his heart overflowed. He seemed to see before him the whole Catholic family, and to have all his beloved children present; and reflecting on these pledges of devotion to himself and to the Apostolic See, he thanked them with all the fervour of his heart, and earnestly prayed to God that this testimony of their faith, more precious than gold, might redound to the praise, the honour, and the glory of Christ. He then directed his words, with a certain air of fatherly compassion, to the miserable condition of those men who wander far from the paths of truth, and he closed this portion of his allocution with a significant allusion to recent events, whilst thanking Heaven that the triumphal monument of the Prince of the Apostles and the city of Rome had not been given up to the rapine of the impious, and that he was

still surrounded by the Roman people, most dear to his affections. In the next paragraph he dwelt with marked significance on "the beautiful and close union" of the bishops with him and the Apostolic See, remarking, in vigorous language, that as there never was a moment in which war more fierce and unholy was waged against the Kingdom of Christ, so never was there a time in which was more requisite the union of the priests of the Lord with the Supreme Pastor of His flock—a union which had ever been, and which he trusted would still more and more become, a spectacle for men and angels.

He then exhorted them to second him in his work, in order—and this is a passage to which I would call the attention of your readers, for reasons I will state directly—that peace might be restored to kingdoms, law to barbarians, tranquillity to monasteries, order to the Church, discipline to ecclesiastics, and to God an acceptable people. The rest of the allocution consisted of a prayer, addressed first to the Holy Spirit, then to the "Mother of beautiful love, of knowledge, and of holy hope, queen, and shield of the Church," and finally to the angels and archangels and all the saints of Paradise, but chiefly to "most Blessed Peter, chief of the Apostles, and Paul, doctor of the Gentiles, a preacher of the truth throughout the entire world; in order that, assisted by potent intercession, and faithfully complying with their ministry, they might all receive the mercy of God amid the temple of God, to whom be honour and glory for ever and ever."

I have thus given you the substance of the allocution, and at each more important point have quoted its language. In the passage to which I particularly solicited attention we obtain the clearest reference to those matters which, it is pretty well known, will, among other things, occupy the Council. The peace which the Pope wishes to see restored to kingdoms is not peace as it is usually understood, but refers to harmony between Church and State, or in other words, the acceptance by governments of certain agreements with Rome, much insisted on by the latter.

The allusion to monasteries and to ecclesiastical discipline

arises from the fact that it is in contemplation to suppress certain orders, to reorganise others, and to give others again the choice of returning to the severity of their pristine rule or of being dissolved. For instance, I am informed that the Sylvestrines are likely to disappear, and that an order of nuns, known as the Oblates, peculiar, I believe, to Rome itself, will likewise be commanded to receive no more members. Restoring the severity of ancient discipline will be a more arduous task. At the present moment the Dominicans of the Minerva are practically divided, into two bodies, one still obeying the relaxed rule of later days and another following the letter of the law reimposed by the reigning Pontiff. The former were exempted by reason of its being thought dangerous to impose severe habits upon them after they had for years been accustomed to comparative indulgences. Much the same thing has occurred at the monastery of Santa Sabina, whose beautiful cloister and garden I mentioned about ten days ago. The Pope, shortly after his accession, found that its members had sadly fallen away from the spirit of the rules of St. Dominick, and insisted on something like a return to the laws of their founder.

It will thus be seen that the Council will busy itself with various matters that scarcely concern the world at large; but with respect to those in which the world is considerably concerned, those passages in the allocution which bear upon mankind generally, and on the authority of the Holy See in particular, are not calculated to lead us to expect that conciliation will proceed from the bosom of the Council. Modern science is plainly asserted to be false; the human race is described as plunged in sin and misery; the lands are filled with conspirators against God and the Church; and the only remedy for these evils is the closest union of the bishops with Rome. Whether that union is to be so close as positively for the future to merge their voice in the infallible voice of the Pope himself remains to be seen. The allocution on that head is ambiguous; and the ambiguity is the only sign of discretion exhibited in the document.

How the Orders of the Church will like their affairs being handled by the bishops I cannot say. Hitherto the regular clergy have always striven to hold their authority direct from the Pope, and have invariably aimed at independence of the bishops of the various dioceses in which they happen to establish themselves, much to the distaste and frequently the perplexity of the latter. Perhaps the Pope trusts that, by consulting the members of the Episcopate concerning the discipline of the monastic orders, he will the more easily lull them into a frame of mind suitable to the acceptance of his Infallibility. Should that dogma, however, ever be affirmed, it is certain that the people who are nearest to the puppet will pull the wires; in other words, that the Regular Orders, nearly all of whom have their headquarters in Rome, and a general resident there likewise, will gain the ear of the Pope and the Curia, and obtain from the source of Infallibility numerous privileges which will provide for bishops, far removed from the Vatican, an everlasting crop of troubles. Unless the bishops are stark staring mad, they can never decree Papal Infallibility in any effectual sense.

The numbers I have already given you of the bishops, etc., present on the 8th I have so far heard confirmed in every quarter, though we are as yet without any official declaration. I am not able to obtain the precise figures of the number of prelates of the Roman Catholic Church. *L'Année Liturgique* for 1870, the great authority in such matters, is not yet out. But the following information, correct at the commencement of the year, will enable your readers to form a pretty just estimate of the proportion present at the first meeting of the Council. On the 1st of January 1869 the Hierarchy consisted of twelve patriarchs, one hundred and seventeen archbishops, nine hundred and five bishops—seven of the archbishops and sixty-three of the bishops belonging to the Oriental Churches in communion with Rome. The cardinals were fifty-seven in number; six cardinal-bishops, forty-three cardinal-priests, and eight cardinal-deacons. Speaking roughly, two-thirds of the entire Hierarchy are already present at the Council.

Great disgust is expressed here at the "Anti-Council" summoned by Signor Ricciardi to meet at Naples, by way of a counter-demonstration to what is going on here. But I think the people most entitled to be disgusted are those who shrink from revolutionary and noisily irreligious manifestations with still greater aversion than they entertain for the unallowable pretensions of Rome. Signor Ricciardi hopes that in every corner of Italy the people will seize the opportunity to express by another *plebiscitum* implacable war against the Pope. That the people of Italy will not trouble themselves to do anything so absurd is certain; and beyond a number of Republicans making themselves ridiculous, nothing will come of the enthusiastic gentleman's summons. I have not heard what has yet happened in the bosom of the Anti-Council at Naples; but upwards of twenty-two thousand lire have been sent, together with an affectionate address, to the Pope, by a number of Neapolitans, in order, as they say, to make reparation for the scandal caused by a few of their fellow-citizens. I fancy it will be a long time before the Anti-Council is as well in funds as this, or even their friends in the capital who took occasion to cover themselves with fresh laughter, on the 8th, in Florence. I have no doubt you will hear from your correspondent of their doings, and I will not trespass on his domain.

Naturally enough, they are rubbing their palms here over the prolonged Ministerial crisis in the kingdom of Italy, the failure of Cialdini being particularly agreeable to them. They quote the words in which he formerly addressed his troops previously to leading them against the Papal forces, and they gloat over his present discomfiture. It certainly is a curious coincidence that at the same moment that the Oecumenical Council opened at Rome with such *éclat*, affairs at Florence should be in such a deplorable political condition. From the old capital, the *Unità Cattolica*, which is published in Turin, sent to the Pope a hundred and fifty thousand lire on the day of the opening, forty thousand of it in gold. That paper alone has collected for him this year half a million, or twenty thousand pounds. Something like a paper, in spite of its confessed "imbecility."

ROME, *December 12.*

I can commence this letter with a budget of information of the very highest importance; information which I should telegraph to you if the authorities here would permit my doing anything of the kind, which they certainly would not. I may premise that my authority is of the highest possible nature, and were I to name him universal credence would be obtained for what I am about to state. To begin with, then, the Pope, in an interview which he granted to the bishops of Italy in a body, spoke out very plainly on the question of Papal Infallibility. He had not, he said, been the one to bring the point into notice and discussion, and as far as he was concerned the question might well have been allowed to sleep, as it had slept for many hundreds of years. Even as it was, he should be sorry to see it raised if it excited bitter discussion and dissension, or if there were the slightest chance of its being a cause of disunion. But upon one point, he told the Italian bishops, he did feel most strongly, and he had a right to expect, and did expect, that the Council would go with him. The matter he referred to was the Syllabus of 1864, and he confidently trusted that it would be accepted by them, in all ethical and social questions, as the general basis of their decisions, seeing that it embodied the fundamental maxims of the Catholic Church.

So much for the spirit, if not the letter, of the remarks addressed by his Holiness to the bishops nearer home. To the bishops of Ireland, who have likewise had an interview with him, he expressed himself with equal clearness; but his observations were addressed in particular to one of the modern errors condemned by the Syllabus. He told these subjects of the British Crown that the chief point to be kept steadily in view by them was that cardinal principle of the Church, by virtue of which liberty of conscience, so much belauded nowadays, is utterly disapproved of. All their powers, religious and political, must be addressed to opposing such a dangerous and abominable licence. So far the information I have given you may be relied upon with the utmost confidence; but what I am now going to state, though proceeding

from the same high authority to which I am indebted for the preceding intelligence, must be regarded as only a sincere and very decided opinion, arrived at under circumstances which afford special opportunities for forming an opinion.

What I am told is, that at the present moment the Ultramontanes are directing their energies exclusively to the carrying of the Infallibility question. They are making the most strenuous efforts to get it passed by decree before the Epiphany—the day on which, as I informed you in a previous letter, the next solemn meeting of the Council in St. Peter's is to take place—in order that, on that Feast, the 6th of January, the Infallibility of the Pope may be proclaimed to the whole Catholic world, to be accepted as an article of faith under pain of eternal damnation, henceforth and for ever. I am happy to be able to add that the same authority—as likely to be accurately informed on this point as any person in Europe—feels pretty confident that in this ambitious design they will be disappointed.

You will remember that I have all along professed myself incredulous as to the dogma of Papal Infallibility ever being established; but you must understand the above opinion as referring only to what will happen by the 6th of January. Nevertheless, if it be true—of which I myself entertain no doubt—that the whole strength and influence of the Sacred College, backed by the intrigues of the Jesuits, and assisted by the burning zeal of such prelates as the Archbishop of Westminster and the Archbishop of Malines, are being concentrated on the conversion of the bulk of the Fathers of the Council to the doctrine of Papal Infallibility before three weeks more have elapsed; and if it should turn out that those three weeks have passed away without the cherished scheme having been accomplished, then, I think, we shall not be presumptuous in entertaining the hope that the Church has escaped the danger of saddling herself and the consciences of her children with the burden of another dogma, more arrogant and preposterous than any she has yet striven to enforce.

If an entire month between the first and second solemn congregation of the Council shall not have availed to overcome

the scruples of dissidents, or to have wrung assent from so preponderating a majority of prelates that what little dissent still holds out would count for nothing, I think we may then consider ourselves as out of the wood. Of course it is to the last degree unlikely that the Council will decide the point in a sense absolutely and plainly hostile to Papal pretensions. If the wire-pullers perceive that they are not likely to carry their point, they will take care that it is not formally voted upon at all; trusting that the future will provide a more favourable occasion for the accomplishment of their designs. It may well be doubted, however, if a more propitious opportunity than the present ever will arise. I fancy that Ultramontaniam has at this moment reached the culminating point of its fortunes.

When a lady, very advanced in years and exceedingly infirm, expressed the intention of visiting Rome, she being then at Vienna, a diplomatist, standing by, ventured to say, "*Vous ne ferez pas mal, Madame, de vous dépêcher.*" So, I say, that if the Ultramontanes intend to proclaim the Infallibility of Rome they had better make haste. Now is their time. At any rate their motto may well be "*Now, or never.*" When I said, as I have done more than once, that I am incredulous as to their prophesied triumph, I do not mean to assert that I utterly disbelieve in its happening. Far from that. I know too well the determined character of the more active spirits in the Church. I know that there has always been a party in it favourable to the dogma. I know that history may be invoked equally to support and to contradict it. I know, too, that busy and skilful hands have for years been laying the train it is now sought to fire, and therefore I should be guilty of extreme rashness were I to feel any confidence that plans so well matured will fail on the very eve of their promised execution. Confidence—arrogant confidence—has been the property of the Ultramontane side, and, reading such productions as Dr. Manning's last pastoral letter, one cannot but perceive that the party, of which he is one of the most conspicuous mouthpieces, entertain no fears whatever as to the victory of their cause.

All I mean, therefore, is, that I regard their confidence as excessive, and, on the whole, am disposed to trust that they will be baffled. Twenty-five years ago they would not have had a ghost of a chance of carrying their point. I will undertake to say that there was not then one single English Roman Catholic, and I doubt if there was a single Irish Roman Catholic, who for one moment believed that the Pope was infallible. On the contrary, they were distinctly taught that the Church and the Church alone, that is, a General Council presided over by the Pope, was endowed with so tremendous a character. Nor will it do to say, as is pleaded by some, that the English Catholics of those days, though an excellent body of people, were infected with the Gallican principles which a prior generation of pastors, denied education in the land of their birth, imbibed at Douay. For if this be so, what becomes of the pleading of M. Gérin, endorsed with such alacrity by Dr. Manning and the *Civiltà Cattolica*, that the Gallican declaration of 1682 was duly retracted by the French episcopate? But it is not true that the belief of English Roman Catholics on this head is to be traced exclusively to the influence of Douay. I can personally answer for it that one English Roman Catholic bishop—I might as well name him—I mean the Bishop of Liverpool, whom ill health detains at present from the Council—used twenty years ago to teach the doctrine, as I have explained it, viz., in the sense opposed to Papal claims.

What may be the opinions of Dr. Gosse at this moment I have no means of knowing; but he is a man of considerable ability, and of great independence and sincerity of character; and I should much doubt if he would change his opinion on so important a matter for anything short of a decision of the Church. Now Dr. Gosse, though it is true that he was educated—if I mistake not—partly at Ushaw College, near Durham, in the days when Douay traditions had great force within its walls, equally, if I mistake not, underwent a portion of his preparation for the priesthood at the English College in Rome. There, at any rate, I presume he ought to have imbibed sound doctrine;

yet you may take it as certain that he, to whom was in an especial manner entrusted the teaching of the young, instructed them in the belief that infallibility resided not in the Pope, speaking either *ex cathedra* or in any other conceivable manner, but in General Councils of the Church presided over by the Roman Pontiffs. Indeed, I know a pupil of his, now advanced to middle life, who, when he heard, about six months ago, for the first time that there was a talk of Papal Infallibility being erected into a dogma, treated the report as an ignorant Protestant invention, and has since confessed that, though he was at three distinct Roman Catholic colleges—one of them, moreover, conducted by the Jesuits—he had never before heard it so much as hinted, save by Protestants, that Papal Infallibility was a Roman Catholic doctrine.

But twenty years of extreme liberalism on the one hand, and of extreme Ultramontanism on the other, have changed all that; and already we are informed from Catholic pulpits and in the Catholic press that the opinion that the Popes are not infallible is *half* heretical. By the 6th of January 1870 they hope and believe that it will be wholly heretical. We live in an age of extremes, and the violent views of those who pique themselves on the name of the Liberal party in Europe have much to answer for in regard to the present antics of Roman Catholicism. In fact, there seems to be a rivalry between them as to which shall teach the more outrageous doctrines. I do not know what will be thought by the Liberal party in England of the exhortation addressed by his Holiness to their allies, the Irish Roman Catholic bishops, or how they will reconcile their cordial political union with a body of men pledged by devotion to the See of Rome, and invited by a special discourse of the Pope to oppose liberty of conscience with all the energy in their power. Nor must it be supposed that we are here dealing with a mere abstract theory that has no material bearing on English politics. The admonition of the Holy Father was intended to encourage and confirm the Irish bishops in their opposition to mixed education, whether in primary schools, in the national schools, or in the Queen's Colleges. I would

commend this interview to the special notice of Mr. Lowe, the sworn upholder of the mixed system.

If the letter of the Bishop of Orleans was a severe stroke for the Ultramontanes, the answer addressed to him by Monseigneur Dechamps, the Archbishop of Malines, is regarded by them as something more than a compensation. The question of opportuneness or inopportuneness, says the archbishop, has run its course; there is an end of that part of the question, and for the following reason. The Church defines revealed truths only when they are denied or contested, and does not trouble itself to condemn errors contrary to faith, save when they are widely diffused. But when truths are really denied, or errors are really spread, the Church cannot remain silent. No doubt she chooses her own time for speaking, but she never fails to speak at length. According to the same authority, the Church has always lived in the belief of the dogma of Papal Infallibility—a most outrageous assertion—and a certain French school disputed it only very late in the day, whilst practically the French Catholics always acknowledged it. This explains the long-suffering of the Holy See with the Gallican school. But if there is a time for being silent there is a time for speaking; and it cannot well be doubted that the time has arrived when an opinion, hitherto held modestly, changes its tone and professes to be certain.

This will give you some idea of the spirit exhibited in the address of the Ultramontane archbishop to his brother prelate. It is impossible not to agree with him, as with Dr. Manning, when arguing the same cause, that the conflict of opinion on the subject is so glaring that it is high time the point were set at rest; but in every other respect his reasoning is more remarkable for a kind of quiet audacity than for any more valuable quality. On all historical questions he is miserably shaky; and professedly evades the well-known errors of Pope Honorius, alluded to in the work by “Janus,” and mentioned likewise by M. Dupanloup. Ignorance mingled with confidence is, however, a characteristic much appreciated at Rome; and M. Dechamp’s letter is accordingly much belauded.

It seems strange, if the doctrine quoted above be sound, that books and catechisms—which have existed in abundance—that taught the heretical doctrine that the Pope is not infallible, should have escaped the fate of such publications as those whose names now lie before me with the condemnation of the Congregation of the Index attached to them: *A History of Superstition*, by Luigi Stefanoni; *The Pope and the Council*, by Janus, etc. This last is prohibited *quocumque idiomate*, in whatever tongue it is printed, and awful penalties are threatened against any one who “dares” to have a copy in his possession. I should have imagined that the doctrine opposed to the Infallibility of the Pope has had a wider circulation than Signor Stefanoni’s *History of Superstition* is ever likely to have. Why, then, has it never yet been condemned?

ROME, December 13.

It would not be accurate to say that Rome is empty. Indeed, there are strange faces in abundance, but they are not of what the Roman shopkeepers call the right sort. Go into the streets, or into the churches, and you will say that Rome is full. But talk to Civilotti, the jeweller; Nazzarri or Spillmann, the *fournisseurs* of the Piazza di Spagna and Via Condotti; or to Jarrett and Cairolì, the livery-stable keepers, and they will tell you the season so far is a miserable one. Many of the small apartments are occupied; nearly all the large ones are tenantless. I do not think there were fifty English faces on the Pincio yesterday, though the file of the carriages was as long as ever the nature of the ground permitted it to be, and the crowd of foot passengers was unusually dense. It happened not to rain yesterday afternoon, though it is pelting again this morning in great style. I have been in Rome thirteen days, and only on three of them did it not rain from morning till night; and of those three only one was really and beautifully fine. Such weather is not altogether unprecedented at this time of the year, though it has never been my ill fortune on any previous sojourn in Rome to come in for a parallel to it.

The day after to-morrow we were to have had the Baths

of Caracalla illuminated, and a display of Bengal lights and fireworks within its ruinous precincts; but the projected entertainment will infallibly have to be postponed. You will say that under such circumstances as these the number of saddle-horses let is no criterion of the influx of visitors. But you must remember that, in coming here, people do not count upon being drenched to the skin every day of their lives; and as horses are hired by the month, our cavaliers and amazons would already have made their contracts. But the horses are eating their heads off in their stalls, not only because the heavens are unpropitious, but because the usual concourse of our rich, dashing countrymen and women is wanting.

In vain in every number of the publication which appears thrice a week, and which is known by the name of the *Arrivée des Étrangers à Rome*, Spillmann Ainé "begs to inform the publick that at the Meet of Fox Hunting he will Keep a Tent for the Buffet furnished with all necessary refreshments for those who wish to partake of them." The "meet of Fox Hunting" is a poor affair this year, and the "tent for the Buffet" has but few visitors. How is it? you will ask. That is just the question everybody is asking here. Many, it is said, have been frightened away by the fear, based upon busy report, that there would be no room for them if they came. Others again dreaded having to pay exorbitant prices for accommodation, and preferred remaining where they were—at Nice, Mentone, Florence, Naples, anywhere—rather than fly to evil extortioners they knew not of.

It is quite certain that there exists a standing conspiracy in Naples and Florence to deter people from coming on here, just as there always exists one in this city to prevent them from journeying on to either of those two places. Like the Irish jury who gave heavy damages to a fair countrywoman in an action for breach of promise of marriage, when there had evidently been no promise at all, simply because, as they alleged, the verdict would bring a heap of money into the Emerald Isle, so all classes of persons in the cities I have named appear to think it perfectly fair to represent the capital in which they do not happen to live as decimated by

fever or tormented by famine prices, all for the benefit of their own establishment. When I was in Florence people who inevitably must have known the real state of the case represented to me that nearly all the apartments in Rome had long been let. Their object was to alarm me against going on, and to keep me where I was. The only result of their invention was to make me write to a Roman correspondent, and authorise him to take rooms for me a full month before I wanted them.

Still when Florence lies, and Neapolitan deceptions have been allowed for, the Romans may blame themselves to a great extent for the fact that scores of English families have been frightened away by the expense of settling here for this winter. The prices asked at the beginning of this month were preposterous; and scarcely an article of necessity can be named which has not very considerably advanced since my last and my recent experience of Rome. You do not think butter in London very cheap; but I wish you could see what we get here for our money.

Nevertheless I do not think that all these explanations combined suffice to explain the thinness of our English and American ranks, especially the wing of them which cultivates the sacred rights of the Goddess Fashion. I have a theory of my own on the subject, and it is this. Scores—should I not say hundreds?—have been induced to avoid the Eternal City by reason of a report which reached my ears before I left England, and which I heard repeated several times and in several places—till I myself came to believe it—on my leisurely journey hither. This report was to the effect that whilst the Oecumenical Council was holding its sittings, no dancing would be allowed in Rome, and Terpsichore would be turned back at the frontiers.

I can quite understand that such tidings would roll back the wave of coming visitors far more effectually than talk of pestilence or news of fabulous prices. There is a race of people as faithful to the travels of the mazy dance as is the sunflower to the sun. When their god sets, what on earth are they to do? They have danced in Paris in January, February, and perhaps part of March. They have danced in London in

April, May, and June. They have danced at Homburg and Baden-Baden in August and September. They have compelled people in the country to get up dances for them even in October. They have danced at Brighton in November; and if they propose to spend December and the beginning of the new year in Rome, it is in order that they may dance over the ruins of empires and the tombs of martyrs. In spite of all the entreaties of St. Peter, the Scotchman of the story went with the music, though the pipes he followed were those of the "puir de'il." With like fidelity all our fashionable young ladies and young gentlemen of high life follow the music, so only it be dance music, let it lead where it will.

Accordingly, when they heard that this year it did not, like all roads, lead to Rome, their suffrages were unanimously given against the First Council of the Vatican. Was there any truth in the report; or was it a wicked canard, fledged in the sandy mud of the Arno? There was an element of truth in it originally, and I will tell you how much. Cardinal Patrizi, the cardinal vicar, the same who celebrated mass in the Council on the day of the opening, did really propose to the Pope that the period covered by its sittings should have the same character and be attended with the same restrictions as are customary during an "Anno Santo," or jubilee year. The first record with which I am acquainted of this species of celebration refers to the first year of the fourteenth century, though I think the term jubilee was not applied till fifty years later, when Clement VI., then at Avignon, but in answer to the prayers of the Roman citizens, addressed to him through Rignzi, decreed that there should be an Anno Santo every fiftieth year, instead of only at the commencement of each century. Urban VI. ordered that it should be kept every thirty-third year, the object being to make its recurrence coincide with what was computed as the length of each generation. Nicholas V. changed it back again to every fiftieth year; but Paul II., in 1464, prescribed that a jubilee should occur every twenty-five years, and the practice of Rome has since been in agreement with that decision. There have been twenty jubilees observed in all.

The description of those of 1300 and 1350 in Villani is exceedingly curious. He was himself a pilgrim in the former year, and informs us that it was this visit to Rome, and the impressions he there received, which gave him the hint of his *Cronica*, thus, like Gibbon, being indebted to the Eternal City for his fame. He tells us that St. Peter's was crowded day and night with worshippers; but St. Peter's was not then the vast St. Peter's of to-day. Two priests, he narrates, stood by the high altar, constantly raking away the heaps of coin cast there by the faithful. In 1350, it is said, 1,200,000 pilgrims visited Rome between Christmas and Easter. The winter was terribly severe; but the inns were not numerous enough to house these constantly arriving hosts, and thousands had to sleep out in the Campagna encamped round huge fires. Clement VI., urged by the motives I have already named, was likewise visited in his sleep by St. Peter, who ordered him to "throw open the portal, and send forth a fire to warm and illumine the entire world." Twelve persons were on one occasion trampled to death in St. Peter's—which reminds me of a report I have not been able to verify, that a lady suffered the same terrible fate last Wednesday—and the stifling of two or three was of common occurrence.

The last jubilee held here was in 1825, when the number of pilgrims was nearly 400,000. An amusing account of it may be read in the late Massimo d'Azeglio's *Memoirs of his Life*, translated into English by a distinguished countryman of his, long resident amongst us, and published by Messrs. Chapman & Hall. Then comparatively a young fellow, he was unable to endure the melancholy of the Eternal City, changed for the moment into one vast church. All the theatres and places of amusement were rigorously closed, and fast days were of frequent recurrence. In fact the year was like one long Lent. In 1850, the last jubilee year, the Pope was absent, and the customary celebrations were omitted. Should he live till 1875 I doubt not that Pius IX. will make up for lost time. Cardinal Patrizi, as I have said, wishing either to anticipate that date or to make a tardy compensation for the Republican wickedness of

1849-50, proposed to the Pope that the period covered by the Council should be treated as an Anno Santo. The Pope showed his good sense by refusing to accede to the too zealous request; and the bills are already on the walls announcing what performances there will be after Christmas at the Apollo, the Argentina, the Capranica, etc. No *encores* will be allowed, and no throwing of bouquets, lest they should be turned to the purpose of expressing political feeling. Seeing what a clean sweep has recently been made of all the venturous spirits likely to run the perils of adopting such a course, I should have thought the precaution superfluous. But the Roman authorities like to make surety doubly sure. They do not, however, it will be seen, prohibit dancing, and on Friday evening last there were more twinkling feet than I care to count. Let the fashionable world take courage, then, and not be scared away from the Eternal City by the vision of Lenten vigils and aesthetic teas.

The Pope has nominated Signor Cesare Cantù as the historian of the Council, and has ordered that a special seat shall be provided for him. This high mark of favour is very properly bestowed, whether we regard Signor Cantù as a man of letters or a staunch upholder of the Papal cause. It is now a good many years since he first became favourably known to his countrymen by a history of Como, his native place. This was shortly followed by an historical romance. But he soon devoted himself to a more lofty and enduring walk of composition, dedicating sixteen years to a *Universal History*, a work of vast labour and erudition, extending over several volumes.

ROME, December 14.

The presence in Rome at so solemn a juncture of a lady of such high rank and revered character as the Countess of Hohenems, *alias* Empress of Austria and Queen of Hungary, is a source of intense and only natural delight to the powers that rule at the Vatican, to the Vatican's faithful courtiers, and probably to most, if not all, of the fathers of the Oecumenical Council. I have heard her compared to the

holy and devout women who followed our Lord in the course of His sacred preaching. Do not be shocked at such language; it is as common as possible in this part of the world, though perhaps it is rarely used without a deeper purpose than lies on the surface. You see that by the apt comparison the Holy Father is by very direct implication compared to Christ; and the oftener this is done, and done without challenge, the nearer it is thought are we advancing to a cheerful recognition of the Pope's God-like Infallibility.

In one of the official accounts published here of the ceremonies of the 8th, the following paragraph is employed to describe the position of the Pontiff in the Hall of the Council: "The Pope towers above it all. He is exposed to view on a lofty throne, like Christ teaching. The bishops, who represent the Apostles, are seated at his feet." Here you have the sound Roman doctrine, writ large and plain for everybody to understand. No wonder, therefore, that no opportunity should be lost of drawing the same pregnant comparison; and when the Empress of Austria is spoken of in connection with the loving Maries, the Vatican, in uttering one word for its visitor, is uttering two for itself. Nevertheless, her Majesty, though here in the strictest incognito, is made much of even on her own account. I suppose the sins of the constitutional Austro-Hungarian kingdom are not laid to her charge; she is considered only as the consort of that obedient Kaiser who, when he had things all his own way, made a Concordat with Rome after Rome's own heart.

Though the visit of the Empress is avowedly made to her sister, and not to the Pope of Rome, pious lips are not wanting to see in the coincidence of her presence in the Eternal City with the opening of the Council the direct intervention of Heaven. The way in which the designs of the latter are explained here is funny indeed. You will perhaps remember the explanation given me by a devout soul on the morning of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, when I complained of the badness of the weather. A still more curious motive is attributed to the celestial powers for the downfall of rain with which they visited us on that occasion. It was sent, we are now semi-officially

informed, on purpose to keep thousands away from St. Peter's; inasmuch as had all the tens of thousands flocked to the ceremony who wished to be present at it, there must necessarily have been a terrible loss of life.

It is a small matter, therefore, to believe that Heaven has kept the ex-Queen of Naples childless all these years in order to make her first accouchement chime in with the Oecumenical Council of the Vatican. Be this as it may, her Majesty had scarcely recovered from the fatigues of her journey when she went to pay her respects to the Holy Father. It is not improbable that she would have done so the day after her arrival, on the 8th itself, had it not been that the Pope, after the long fatigues of the morning and of part of the afternoon, could scarcely have been in a condition to receive her. On the 9th, however, her first visit was paid; her entire suite being admitted to the Pope's presence, and performing the customary ceremony of kissing his foot. Crowned heads, I believe, are like bishops, exempt from this extreme act of obeisance, and merely salute the ring upon his finger.

I happened to arrive at the Vatican yesterday exactly at noon, being on my way to examine a number of modern pictures bought and presented to the Gallery by the reigning Pontiff, commemorative of the many martyrs canonised by him a few years ago. When I reached the large open court, surrounded on three sides by the well-known triple-storeyed Loggie, and on the fourth by the Papal residence, the court in fact known by the name of San Damaso, I found it filled with soldiers and state carriages, the Pope's own among the number. On inquiring the reason, I was informed that his Holiness was about to pay a state visit to the Empress. He certainly went in style, accompanied by several cardinals, all in their gala equipages, by three bodies of the mounted Guardia Nobile, and a number of court officials. Pius the Ninth, a man ordinarily of simple tastes and habits, certainly turns out well on such occasions, his horses and postillions being well worthy of a monarch.

In the courtyard had assembled all the visitors for the

day to the Vatican Museum, and a few soldiers of the line on guard at the Palace. The latter dropped on their knees, on the wet paving-stones, as the Pope entered his carriage. There was a great clatter on the flags; a couple of French priests called out "Evviva Pio Nono," and the courtyard was empty again. The skull-cap of the Pope was fringed with ermine, which gave to his face a look of softness and mildness more noticeable even than that it usually wears. Of course he distributed his blessing right and left, and was the very picture of serene happiness. Yet, if report speaks truly, storms of anger are not foreign to that smooth countenance; and I have heard of the Vatican rocking to his wrath. Nothing but smiles, however, would be suitable to a visit to so distinguished a personage as the Empress of Austria.

It is certainly a thing for the Roman Catholic Church to boast of, that the fact of being the Head of their Church gives the occupant of the Papal chair precedence over all Catholic monarchs. A brother of Pius the Ninth's may be seen any night at Sinigaglia gossiping at the druggist's, retaining all the simple manners of his birth and position, whilst Pius himself lords it over the proudest sovereigns. I am told that one of our crowned heads will leave us the day after to-morrow. I allude to the Queen of Würtemberg, who, heretic as she is, has not only visited all the Basilicas and many of the churches most indefatigably, but has manifested the keenest interest in the numerous ceremonies which are current.

An interesting spectacle was to be seen the day before yesterday at the church of the Santi Apostoli, the same visited by the Pope, as described by me at the time, on the eve of the Council. There exists in Rome a society which takes its name partly from the Pontiff and partly from the doctrine promulgated fifteen years ago, and which every year holds an academy in commemoration of that event. Poems are recited and music performed, all in honour of Pio Nono and the Madonna. Some years ago Dr. M'Hale might have been seen at one of these anniversaries reciting a poem of his own composition in Celtic. Nor were polyglot

verses wanting on Sunday afternoon. There were declamations in Latin, Arabic, German, Greek, English, Spanish, French, and Italian, all of them, as a matter of course, highly applauded. A cardinal opened the ball, but his eminence—I suppose out of deference to his dignity—confined himself to prose. His theme was the consummate wisdom of the Pontiff, as exhibited in putting the Oecumenical Council under the special patronage of the Immaculate Conception.

It could hardly be expected that marked originality would be displayed in any of the compositions, considering that they were all more or less written on a set theme, and that now rather a hackneyed one. Nevertheless, the anxiety to be present was immense, and I saw scores of people turned away who had not provided themselves with tickets of admission, to be obtained from members of the society and the Minor Conventicles—an order of Franciscans released from the vow of poverty—to whom the adjoining monastery belongs and the keeping of the Basilica is entrusted. In the morning, it being the Third Sunday of Advent, the Pope assisted at High Mass, at St. Peter's, at half-past ten, and a sermon was preached in Latin by the General of the Augustinians. I was not present, as I was reserving myself for the ceremony of the afternoon just described, but I am informed by those who were there that a number of cardinals, patriarchs, primates, archbishops, bishops, and abbots attended, reminding the spectator very largely of the splendid scene to be witnessed with more difficulty four days previously.

To-day the Council meets again for the second time in full congregation. Not solemnly in St. Peter's, for, as I have already explained to you, such a meeting will not occur till the Epiphany. On these grand occasions the Pope will always be present; on the minor ones, I understand, he will take no part in the proceedings. At any rate, he did not intervene on Friday last on the occasion of its first meeting for the transaction of business. Five cardinals presided, appointed for the purpose by the Holy Father. Rather, I should say, only four actually did so, Cardinal De Reisach being absent from alleged indisposition. Mass was sung by

one cardinal and a Latin discourse pronounced by another—interpreters, sworn to secrecy, being provided for the benefit of the Oriental bishops.

As the sitting lasted only five hours, and a considerable portion of the time must have been occupied by these pious functions, I can well believe that the business transacted was not of a heavy or a very grave character. Amongst other things, five Fathers were elected to form what is called the "Committee of the Judges of Excuses," to whom it will belong to receive and examine, in conformity with ancient precedent, the pleas of absence presented by the various prelates who have not obeyed the Bull of Indiction or Summons of the Pope to attend the Council. It will be their duty, likewise, to receive and examine the requests of those who wish to obtain leave of absence during its sittings. The committee itself, however, will have no power of decision in any of these cases. Their office is to report upon them to the General Congregation, in whose hands final judgment rests. It is a common trick here to endeavour to throw discredit on parliamentary institutions, and the scribes of this city have never done protesting that the Council has nothing in common with such miserable concerns. Nevertheless, the parallel between the proceedings of the Council and those known to our own House of Commons is very striking. It must, however, be confessed that we have no committee analogous to another one just appointed by the Council—a committee for settling the controversies and composing the quarrels and complaints which may arise among the Fathers. Perhaps the recollection of what took place at Trent, where some of the right reverend debaters fell to fisticuffs, may have prompted the nomination of this particular committee.

I told you yesterday of the honour conferred on Signor Cesare Cantù, and of his being assigned a place in the Council as its future historian. He may safely exclaim, "*Non omnis moriar*," now that his literary fame will be linked with such an event. There is another and still better known publicist in Rome at present, and equally devoted to the Holy See, but to whom so striking a privilege has

not been extended. It is, perhaps, as well that it is withheld, for were he once admitted among the Fathers, or anywhere near them, a row of some sort would assuredly be the consequence. I allude, of course, to the highly gifted, but supernaturally pugnacious, antagonist of the Bishop of Orleans, M. Louis Veuillot, editor of the *Univers*. I very much doubt if the temper which he declares his arrival in Rome has superinduced in him will last. He says that calm and tranquillity have descended upon his soul. He speaks of an inexpressibly peaceful joy, and declares that he feels the breath of the morning. M. Riancey, of the *Union*, speaks in the same strain. One feels at Rome, he says, nothing but calm and peace. Nevertheless, I would not answer for a continuation of such sentiments were they to encounter anybody who disagreed with them. Even as it is, their placidity may be put to the test, for the real business of the Council is scarcely transacted in the general sittings, one of which I have been describing to you. Rome at present is one vast lobby, and "lobbying" is the order of the day.

You must not suppose me to mean that those corrupt influences are brought to bear which are said to sway, indeed to settle, divisions in the Capitol at Washington. But all influences that are not illicit are in full play to convince the obstinate and convert the recalcitrant to the belief in Papal Infallibility; and so ardent a spirit as M. Veuillot may find abundant opportunities for exercising his zeal in so sacred a cause. Were the same majority required for a decision of the Council as is required for the election of the Pope—a majority of two-thirds—there would not be a chance of the doctrine being established. But a mere majority suffices, and it is absolutely certain that such a majority exists.

Nevertheless, do not be alarmed. More deference will be paid to the minority than is sometimes paid in another famous assembly I could mention; and the real point now at issue is, to what extent the opposition to Papal Infallibility can be reduced. A phalanx formidable either in numbers, character, or determination, will, I have every

reason to believe, suffice to get the question shelved ; which, as I have previously explained, would be equivalent to a definitive defeat of Ultramontane pretensions. Outwardly, however, there are no signs of fear, or even of prudence, in the ranks of the Ultras. Both in speech and in print they still stickle for their pet doctrines, and for the imperative necessity of its being proclaimed once for all as of obligation upon every true child of the Church.

ROME, *December 17.*

The review of the Pontifical troops, which took place in the Borghese Gardens on the afternoon of the 15th, and an account of which I should have sent you yesterday but for the more pressing and important matter which formed the subject of my letter of that date, had been appointed to come off fully ten days ago. The cause of the delay was no want of readiness on the part of the military authorities, but simply the detestable weather with which we had been favoured ever since the commencement of the month. As certain corps which I shall have occasion to mention had been brought to Rome for the special purpose of the review, it was determined on Monday last, in a fit of desperation, that it must take place on the 15th or never. Why it should be absolutely necessary to have fine weather will be more intelligible to you when I state that the main object of the spectacle was to show the foreign bishops what an imposing force the Pope has at his disposal, and to satisfy them that in dispatching such considerable sums to Rome, as so many of them have done in the shape of Peter's Pence, and by various other religious methods employed in their respective dioceses on behalf of the Papal exchequer, they have got something for their money.

There are many pious people who profess to believe that if they sally out without an umbrella it is sure to rain, whereas if they carry with them that safeguard against the fickleness of the skies it is sure to remain fine. Persons so minded would necessarily see in the courageous fixing of the review for the 15th only two days before, when the flood-gates of heaven still remained open, a sufficient explanation

of the fact that, in spite of all expectations to the contrary, Wednesday morning broke cloudlessly over the Eternal City, and the warmth and light of a vernal sun were shed around column, dome, and the soaring spray of our countless fountains. By one o'clock the streets echoed to the roll of drums, the tramp of horses, and the strains of martial music. Carriages were already waiting at the doors of their owners, and the Via del Babuino, the street which runs from the Piazz di Spagna to the Piazza del Popolo, was thronged with foot passengers.

I did not reach this last-mentioned spot till two o'clock, for I knew there was no need for any such hurry. The dragoons, the last to arrive on the ground, were just passing through the gate, and I followed them into the gardens. There is no spot in Rome—or to speak more exactly, just out of it—better known than the grounds of the Borghese. The entrance to it faces the Anglican Church, which Papal horror of heterodoxy has condemned to an extramural position; and not unfrequently the devout attendants at that place of worship turn into the adjoining pleasure-grounds when the service is over, perhaps to meditate on the sermon just delivered, perhaps to give themselves up to more lively thoughts.

Like the defile fatal to Roman rashness near Thrasymene, which the Roman historian, lamenting the sad fortunes of his countrymen on that bloody day, calls *locus aptus insidiis*, the Borghese Gardens may be spoken of, though not in a military sense, as a spot made for wiles and snares—in more modern parlance, a place regularly cut out for flirting. I have known of several love scenes in those ilex-shaded alleys, in those violet-carpeted glades, on the marble rims of those sparkling fountains, in the fern-covered nooks of those foamy cascades, some of which ended in marriage and an establishment for life, but more, at the end of the Roman season, in broken vows, returned tokens, and burnt love-letters. A fiercer God than the God of Love, however, has on occasions taken up his quarters in this sylvan spot. When the French were pressing the Republicans hard in 1849 from near this quarter,

plantation after plantation was cut down in order to take away cover from the besiegers. But for all the ravages of Mars there are still groves enough for whispering lovers, for breviary-reading priests, for basking invalids, for dreamers, for everybody.

But I am thinking too much of the spot and too little of the military spectacle. Counting up the evening before with a captain of Zouaves the number of men likely to be on the ground, we arrived at the conclusion that there would be about five thousand. I should think my friend was probably right, though I should have thought, on seeing them file past, that they were at least a fifth as numerous again, whilst report, never to be trusted in such matters, put them at eight thousand. In the arena of that lovely amphitheatre which is surrounded by splendid umbrella pines, and which is known by the name of the Amphitheatre of Siena, because it is reputed to be exactly the same size as the famous public piazza of that city in front of the Palazzo Pubblico, where the annual races take place—so well described in Mr. T. A. Trollope's novel of *Gemma*—were three batteries of artillery, each of six guns, one of them a mountain battery carried by mules. Behind them, but also in the amphitheatre, were three squadrons of dragoons. Lining the rim of the amphitheatre were spread out the unmounted gendarmes, the *Squadriglieri*—of whom more anon—the Antibes Legion, and the Line. In a far-extending horseshoe on the grassy sward above the amphitheatre were ranged the Zouaves, the most numerous corps in the Papal army.

Anybody acquainted with the Borghese Gardens, will readily believe that the day being such as it was, a summer's day with almost summer heat, a more beautiful sight of the kind could not be devised. Punctually at half-past two, the bursting forth of one of the military bands—there were five on the ground—announced the arrival of General Kanzler and his staff, mixed with whom might be distinguished two English uniforms, one of them of the Scotch Fusiliers. Having already made my own inspection, I left the general to make his, and hurried off to a spot on

which I had already fixed for seeing the troops march past. They were not long in coming. A body of unmounted gendarmes led the way, followed by two hundred and fifty *Squadriglieri*, the most picturesque though the most simply dressed of the lot. Their costume is really nothing more than the Sunday attire of well-to-do peasants in the neighbourhood of Rome, only more smartly made and better fitting. A short frieze jacket and waistcoat, crimson sash, knee breeches, and ordinary slouch hat with a cock's feather, completed their uniform. Stay—I have omitted one important item. They wore no boots or shoes, but sandals made of bullock-hide, technically known as *ciocce*, which gives the name to the so-called *cioccaro* dress, universally worn in whole districts south of Rome, and to be seen by visitors to this city in the costume of the female models who congregate at noon on the steps of the Trinità de' Monti.

These *Squadriglieri* were originally raised for the purpose of brigand-hunting, and are enlisted from the peasantry of the mountains. Knowing each rock, pass, and hamlet, they have proved infinitely more serviceable for this purpose than regular troops, particularly when the latter were foreigners, totally ignorant of the locality infested and of the language of the country-folk. They distinguished themselves in so marked a manner on the field of battle, though but imperfectly drilled, in the campaign of Mentana in 1867, that their numbers were considerably increased, and they are now eight hundred strong. They have, however, no officers of their own, but are attached to the Mounted Gendarmes, a corps consisting largely of Neapolitans, and much relied upon for their singular fidelity to the Papal cause in all emergencies.

The *Squadriglieri*, or scouts, had been brought to Rome expressly to figure in the review, and they certainly excited more interest and attention than any of their fellows. After them came the Mounted Gendarmes, a very fine body of men, and then a company of Engineers. The *Cacciatori Esteri*, or Foreign Rifles, were followed by five battalions of Zouaves, who would certainly do credit in personal appearance, though scarcely in drill, to any army in Europe. Then

came the Line, not much to speak of, though perhaps about equal in appearance to an ordinary French regiment of the Line, such as French vanity never permits to be seen in Paris. The Carbineers came next, and after them the Antibes Legion, whose indifferent reputation corresponds with their questionable origin. Four squadrons of dragoons attracted attention, partly because they were very fairly mounted, and partly because, once the most unpopular troops in Rome, they have recently risen in public estimation, and in their ranks, formerly avoided like the pest, may now be found the sons of Roman nobles. I recognised among them the young face of the Mexican Prince Iturbide, the *protégé* of the unfortunate Maximilian, ruined by the fall of his patron, and now indebted to the Emperor of Austria for an allowance of nine hundred francs a month. He is in the Dragoons, and lives in barracks with the rest of the men.

I cannot say much for the Artillery, though it was quite as good as I expected to find it. It consisted of eighteen rifled guns, the mountain battery taken to pieces and carried on the backs of mules being the most attractive and business-like. "Who is that?" I asked of a young lady who, I verily believe, knows the entire Papal army. I pointed to a young lad with a pair of piercing eyes, whose face I felt sure I had seen before. "You have seen his uncle's face," she said; "*that* is young Antonelli. He is a private in the Artillery. And here," she added, "come the ambulances that were *not* at Mentana." She was a fierce Papalina; so I comforted her by the reminder that there have been other more celebrated armies and more celebrated campaigns in which much the same thing had happened.

I find that the discontent in the army here is very considerable, and by no means unfounded. As I have my information from highly friendly sources, you may rely implicitly on what I say. General Kanzler, who is both Minister of War and Commander-in-Chief, is exceedingly unpopular. "When Lamoricière was over us," said an officer, "such a thing as an injustice was unknown. But now there is nothing but injustice."

Yet it is to Lamoricière that General Kanzler owes his

present position. I am assured, though I hesitate to believe it, that he not very many years ago held a humble position in London; that coming out here he soon won his epaulettes; that Lamorisière, noting his gallantry at Castelfidardo and Ancona, got him made brigadier. From that point the transition to his present fortunes was easy and rapid. Yet he is said not to understand his business; and his reputation suffered a severe shock during the summer of last year, when he insisted on marching the Zouaves to a spot known as Hannibal's Camp, just below Rocca di Papa, and a short distance above Frascati, in the very hottest weather, and exposing them to terrible dysentery in a camp established there for the occasion, out of mere vanity and a desire to mimic greater Powers. I am assured on the best authority that the number of deaths was terrible.

But the same hand which promoted his elevation to the particular post he occupies, keeps him there. He is supple, it is said, to the wishes of Cardinal Antonelli; and that is the secret of his stability. Poor De Mérode, when Minister of War, could not hit it off with the same all-powerful cardinal, and had to retire. The consequence, it is further said, of the cardinal's influence over the affairs of the army is to be seen in the prevalence of unblushing favouritism. Young Frenchmen of rank or of money are made officers almost immediately after their arrival, whereas others may wait for ever for promotion. "They make the campaign of the café," said a Zouave to me, "and are made heaven knows what." Frenchmen are not a fourth of the corps of Zouaves, yet they contrive to have everything in it their own way. There are two Irish captains, but no English; and the Dutch, who compose more than half of the force, are but scurvily treated. Its numerical strength at present is about four thousand; but the period of enlistment is only two years, and I am assured that next month a thousand, whose term will be up, will not re-enlist. In the other corps favouritism is shown to the Romans, so that it has passed into a proverb that a Roman may do without reprimand what will bring on the stranger confinement in barracks.

I repeat these things, as I hear them from trustworthy sources ; but as far as a civilian's eye is good for anything in such a matter, I am bound to say that nearly half—the best half, I presume—of the Papal army which I saw^d on Wednesday made, on the whole, a very creditable appearance. But I doubt their capacity for much manœuvring or for acting together. The pace at which the general and his staff, from mere gaiety of heart or from motives of vain-gloriousness, for there was no necessity for the feat, galloped down a steep incline and round a sharp corner of hard road, before taking up their position to see the troops marched past, argued indifferently for their sense. Perhaps they wanted to strike terror into the beholders. I confess I was mortally afraid, but it was lest one or more of them should come a tremendous cropper.

The spot they choose when this little performance was concluded is the first recess you come to when driving up the main road of the Borghese grounds. Above it, as on a terrace, is the private garden, and here were assembled a vast concourse of high Church dignitaries, in fact the bulk of the Fathers of the Council, and their striking dresses, mingled with the tropical grasses, aloes, palm trees, and cactuses, produced as striking an effect as any other portion of the military-ecclesiastical spectacle. The prelates seemed highly delighted with the entertainment provided for them, and went away more than ever impressed with the wisdom of that Pontiff they are invited to pronounce infallible.

I had scarcely time to get home and dine—dinner being expressly ordered by everybody an hour and a half earlier than usual—before I had to start for the Baths of Caracalla, which were to be illuminated at seven o'clock with Bengal lights, and where a species of entertainment, consisting of military music, fireworks, and an eruption of Vesuvius, somewhat profanely suggestive of Cremorne, was to be provided for a sum of three francs. It was a lovely night, and even remarkably warm for the time of year, though I had not been there long before I repented my temerity in not having put on an overcoat, and longed for one of those cloaks to which Antoninus owed his barbaric but familiar name of

Caracalla. I cannot say that I saw more than one bishop there, though it is possible that others were present in strict incognito, but the lay world congregated in force. A good military band of some sixty performers, a bright moon attended by a host of stars, and the ruins themselves sufficed to amuse the company till the real business of the evening began.

Entertainments of the nature I am describing used always to take place in the Coliseum, but I understand the authorities have arrived at the conclusion—which I think they might have reached long ago—that a spot consecrated by the blood of innumerable martyrs, by the presence of many shrines, a central cross of gigantic size, and the recurrence of various religious ceremonies, is scarcely the proper place for the displays of a pyrotechnist. Henceforward such enterprising gentlemen are to play their pranks in the Baths of Caracalla; though I wonder what the ghosts of noble Romans—if there were any such after these Baths came into existence at the beginning of the third century after Christ—and the heart of Shelley (buried not far off) who composed a goodly part of his *Prometheus* within its precincts, would say to the selection of this site for the squibs, and crackers, and rockets of a modern holiday crowd.

Popes, however, have dealt so ruthlessly with the monuments of Pagan Rome in the furtherance of their own pet projects that Pius IX. doubtless thinks it of no earthly importance what is done to unhallowed ground. Just as the Septizonium of Severus was literally pulled to pieces to promote the pious but inartistic designs of Sixtus V., so the *Thermae* of Antoninus were used as a sort of quarry whence pillars, and statues, and blocks of marble were carried to enhance pontifical vain-glory and ambition.

Nevertheless, more perhaps on this spot than on any other in Rome do we gain the most imposing view of what Byron calls “the skeleton of her gigantic form.” It has always been, to my thinking, the most impressive ruin in Rome. Was it the *Cella Calidaria*, or the *Cella Frigidaria*—the cold bath, the warm bath, or the vapour bath—which was given over to the fiery ingenuity of Signor Atanasio

Marazzi? Let antiquarians decide. I had a very learned one with me, and we discussed the matter whilst the band played a waltz that would have astonished the Roman frequenters of the bath, the theatre, or the library, all of which and more stood upon this site, and we arrived at a conclusion which, I know, disagrees with many notable pundits. Let me not then attempt to settle the question, but content myself with saying that, in spite of my aversion to what I regarded as the desecration of the spot, the effect produced by the strong Bengal lights on the soaring and majestic Cyclopean fragments of ruin was exceedingly fine, and a thing never to be forgotten. The owls, deeming it anything but midnight, flew out of their nests and circled round and round overhead, mingling their weird cries with the fizzing of the rockets. The eruption of Vesuvius, proceeding from the lowest of the four piers that once supported the roof of the centre compartment of the baths, was all that common curiosity could desire; but I was glad to go, and to find myself in the moonlight under the Arch of Constantine, and among the ruins of the Forum.

Rome, *December 20.*

The fine weather—the really fine, bright Roman winter weather—has brought the whole population out into the public places like flies from the cracks of a wall. It is impossible to say any longer that Rome is not full. True, there have been mid-Decembers when there were more English and American visitors in the Eternal City than can be counted now; but English and Americans, though an important section of the human race, do not exclusively compose it, and anybody who was on the Pincian as long and as late as I was yesterday evening, would surely arrive at the conclusion not that Rome was not full enough, but that it was too full.

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I suspect that but little thought of siege or saint enters the heads of most of the goodly folks who periodically cover the Pincian in swarms that may literally be compared

to those of ants. I feel sure that no city in the world contains anything like the number of private carriages in proportion to population than Rome does. Not to have a carriage is to be denied the chief if not the only amusement in which this serious and self-contained-looking people indulge. And very good equipages they are. Compared with Florence, which always has a sort of democratic demirep air, Rome is a singularly aristocratic city. Everything fast, loud, bad style, seems banished from it.

The Romans turn out admirably well on the Pincian, and they turn out with a regularity that is astonishing. The space is very confined; the ground is known by heart to every one of them; every face is as familiar to them as their own; yet here they are, every evening, as punctual as the twelve o'clock gun of the castle of St. Angelo, or the Ave-Maria bells of I dare not say how many churches and oratories in this sacred city.

To them, too, you must add the carriages of the visitors, by no means so stylish as those of the residents, but still—though hired by the month or season—not amiss. Five hundred francs a month used to be the cost. The Council have sent it up to seven hundred and fifty. You see bishops must ride. In the first place, their years prevent them from being muscular Christians in the pedestrian line; and, in the second place, there is their dignity. But seven hundred and fifty francs a month for conveyance about a by no means large city makes a big hole in many an episcopal purse. Some of them get over the difficulty by clubbing together, so that it is not unusual to see three bishops in one carriage. Why not four? you ask. You might as well say, Why not five? for there is a vacant seat on the box if a second servant be dispensed with. Let me give you the explanation. The fourth seat is occupied by the chaplain of one of the three prelates, for a bishop thus unattended would scandalise orthodoxy as much as it would have shocked Thackeray to have heard of a fashionable lady walking to church without John Thomas behind to carry her Prayer-book.

It is amusing to observe how very much the relation of the chaplain to his superior varies according to the disposition

of the latter. Sometimes you will see him walking behind, or half by the side of the bishop and half behind. Here you may be sure the bishop is some stately Spaniard, who thinks much of his office and perhaps of himself. Sometimes you will see the two walking together almost arm in arm, and upon terms of all but equality. This is your Irish prelate, genial, jovial, not a bit proud, who would call cousins with any man, so he were not a heretic or a Saxon. One bishop yesterday evening attracted a great deal of attention from his striking likeness to the Pope; but to be an Oriental is to cut out all European dignitaries, cardinals, Pope, and all. What with their beards and what with their costumes, they are the observed of all observers.

When it was beginning to grow a little chilly—for the sun had gone down—I told my coachman to get out of the queue as soon as he could and drive home. I might as well have told him to leap the Muro Torto. The dragoons were on the ground—as they always are when there is a great crowd—and would allow no carriage to fall out of the queue on any pretence whatever. I was but a good arrow-shot from my house, but it took me three-quarters of an hour from the time I gave the order to reach it. Round and round, and in and out, and back again, all according to strict regulation, was I borne, swearing inwardly that the Pincian should see me no more, save before breakfast, for many a day to come.

I confess that yesterday—the day in question—was Sunday. Perhaps it was a punishment for my sins, and for doing in Rome as the Romans do on Sunday. The English visitors show up only after afternoon service, and these for the most part on foot; but I am bound to add that they look as if they enjoy that shadow of a shade of Sabbath dissipation.

As for the Romans themselves, I believe they would like not to go home till morning. When it grows really too cold to remain on the Pincian any longer, for the spot is at a considerable elevation, and much exposed, they then descend to the Corso, and drive up and down there for another hour or two. Fancy a queue of carriages driving up and down Bond Street, over and over again on a Sunday evening in December,

for the fun of the thing! Am I uncharitable in thinking that these late twilight hours suit Roman complexions? I am sure thousands of English women would go to the stake for the proper thing, and to keep up appearances; and I therefore suspect that scores of people who remain on the Pincian after the sun has set, and then transfer themselves to the Corso, are often very cold and very miserable. Go there, however, in early morning, or any time during the day when it is flooded with sunshine, and it certainly is one of the most agreeable spots ever devised for the delectation of luxurious man.

ROME, December 22. .

There is a word much in use in Tuscany, though I would not undertake to say that it would be conceded the *imprimatur* of the promoters of the Dellacruscan Dictionary, or that it is a fair sample of that pure Italian which goes by the title of *lingua Toscana*. The word I refer to ought, nevertheless, to be constantly heard in "*bocca Romana*," since the thing it signifies is of more frequent occurrence here than in any other city in the world. When a Florentine wishes to inform you that you have been outwitted, humbugged, befooled—in a word "sold"—he tells you you have been *minchionato*. That is just what the bishops have been in being brought to Rome. They have been sold to a standstill. They have come from north, south, east, and west, and every point between; they have come from mountain and valley, over hill and over sea; from populous English cities, from historic French sees, from Canadian backwoods, from South American pampas, from tropical heat, from polar cold, from Palestine, from Africa, from the land of Confucius, and from the territories that abut on those of Brigham Young; at vast expense, at immense personal inconvenience, disregarding the infirmities of their age, the wants of their dioceses, the fatigue and weariness of long travel; seven hundred of them nearly—patriarchs, primates, archbishops, bishops, abbots with and without cures: and all for what? To be *minchionato*: to find themselves mitred ciphers, nobodies in big copes, silent helpless spectators of their own deposition, councillors

denied the right of counselling, fathers of the Church treated like so many children.

They were told that they had been sent for to heal the sorrows of centuries; to discover some magnetic cement of concord that would draw and knit all now jarring sects of Christendom together; to show forth to an incredulous modern world that the Holy Spirit was still with them as with the Apostles and disciples on the Day of Pentecost; and that though they represented many tongues, many nations, indeed the whole habitable world, they could speak with only one voice, let discussion be as free as ever it might. No wonder if to such a summons they responded with alacrity. Convinced of their apostolic mission, and however humble concerning their own individual wisdom, yet assured that in the full body of the episcopate reside the words of eternal life, they trooped, as never bishops trooped before, to this First Council of the Vatican. And with what result? To find, when they got there, that they had been invited from all ends of the earth simply to register foregone conclusions, and to figure in and swell a Papal pageant. They have been brought to Rome as Raphael, as Fra Angelico, as Perugino, as Pinturicchio, as Michelangelo, as everybody who has ever been bidden to it by the Vatican was brought to Rome, in order to gratify the insatiable and vainglorious cravings of Papal ambition.

Rome never produced an artist of its own, and never had any first conception even of what art really is; but Roman Pontiffs knew how to press all these men and more into the service of Papal handiwork, and exalt herself by their borrowed lustre. So with the bishops whom she had bidden to her Council. She wants neither their learning, their piety, nor their inspiration, unless they are learned, pious, and inspired in the Roman cause.

So they arrive; and to find what? That the days of consulting are long since past; that Rome has already had its consultations and made its combinations, and that the whole thing is settled. The play has been written, the parts allotted, the claque got ready, and they are only the side

scenes, the supernumeraries, the blue light, the mere etceteras of the drama.

That is what it is to be *minchionato*; to be a bishop, yet not in the secrets of the Sacred College; to be a servant of God, yet not a fierce, uncompromising, intriguing Ultramontane. Organisation has done everything; and what with Immaculate Conceptions, Japanese martyrs, centenaries, confraternities of Peter's pence, confraternities of St. Peter's chains, Zouaves, Mentana, and the rest of it, Pius IX. and his fellow-conspirators have succeeded in creating throughout Europe a Roman party such as never before existed in the Church; and I verily believe that the consequence is that if the Roman Catholic world were polled to-morrow there would be an overwhelming majority in favour of Papal pretensions, of Sacred College arrogance, of the wiles of the Propaganda, and of the complete subordination of the entire episcopate to the successor of free-thinking Medicis and incestuous Borgias. The pity of it. It is a thing to make a moderate mind despair. Are rampant Radicalism and Ultramontane Llamaism to be the only two forces left; and is the century to close with only these two monsters facing each other?

Will all the bishops—*all* of them—stand being *minchionati*? We must try to look at this matter, not from the Protestant, but from the Catholic point of view; and I should think the fiercest Protestant, trying to put himself in that position, will be able to understand what an almost invincible repugnance a sincere Roman Catholic prelate, however large-minded, must feel against pushing his opposition to the Papal camp to the verge of a schism. To begin with, he has lived all his life in the cardinal conviction that the mark of marks belonging to the Church is unity—unity of faith, unity of discipline, unity of obedience. He has believed—and history supports him in the belief—that no people or nation has ever discarded the headship of Rome without losing unity altogether, even in its own bosom, and that its rebellion has been only the prelude to a variety of rebellions against itself. He is aware that all non-Catholics would rejoice over a fresh

schism and a fresh breaking away from Roman bonds. He may well be pardoned if he hesitates to give the world that piece of satisfaction, and should in the last appeal shrink from dividing the seamless robe of Christ.

Take the Bishop of Orleans. What will he do? And what will those do who agree with him? Unless they be prepared, if the worst comes to the worst, to carry their opposition even to the brink of severance, the organisation of Rome will be too much for them. Twice have I quoted notable words of Monseigneur Dupanloup as to what would be his bearing if strife became inevitable; and doubtless your readers have them well in mind. Yet turn to the following sentences written by the same hand and of a later date. They occur in a letter caused by a remonstrance on the part of Dr. Manning as to the bishop's French translation of his phrase, "The Pope is infallible apart from the episcopal body"—"apart" being rendered—correctly enough, as it seems to me—"séparément."

I do not propose, however, to enter into the controversy, but only to call attention to the following sentences in M. Dupanloup's letter. "And now," he writes, "the Council is open. The whole Episcopate is gathered round Pius IX. Let us, then, forgetting every irritating question, rather contribute, each one according to his ability, to the great work of pacification and enlightenment which the Holy Father has desired for the salvation of souls, and which the world awaits." This is scarcely the language of a rebel. A man of great authority, both by virtue of his position and his intimate knowledge of the workings of the Papal Curia, said to me yesterday, "The Bishop of Orleans, pious and learned man as he is, will, as soon as Papal Infallibility has been decreed, go back to his diocese and write a pamphlet in defence of it." He is thoroughly convinced that the dogma of Papal Infallibility will be affirmed, and confesses that he is lost in astonishment at the Bishop of Orleans imagining he can prevent it. You will say that I am obstinate in still adhering to the contrary opinion—the opinion that the favourite tenet of Ultramontanism will either be waived or asserted in so ambiguous a form as to be

worthless. But remember, if I err, I err with mighty authorities, the representatives of the most influential Catholic Powers.

• We are in the full swing of devotions preparatory to Christmas. I told you yesterday of the finger of St. Thomas being exposed to view to convert the unbelieving ; a process which reminds one rather of the argument in favour of the assertion that a fiddle played a tune of its own, “and here is the fiddle that did it.” At St. John Lateran we are invited to examine the table at which the Last Supper was eaten. I cannot think that such improbable and utterly unattested relics are calculated to do service to any religion. To-morrow we shall be asked to venerate the body of Saint Servulus, who died in 380, and whose life has been written by Gregory the Great. The main reason why we are recommended to hold him in such regard is, that he spent the whole of his life at San Clemente begging.

If that be a conclusive claim to canonisation, Rome swarms with saints, if scarcely with martyrs. The legless Beppo who used to squat on the steps of the Trinità, and deal out, according to his luck, more blessings and curses than any man—the Pope himself not excepted—in the Papal dominions, has disappeared ; but the race of mendicants flourishes as bravely as ever in this city of churches and ruins. The weather has come back ; but on Sunday last, when it was beautifully fine, I could not help asking myself whether I had the best time of it in this world, or the four old men and women seated on comfortable chairs in the sun outside Santa Maria degli Angeli, and rattling a *baiocco* in a tin mug, which they keep as a nest egg, the fruitful parent of further contributions.

ROME, December 23.

“I am just back”—as they would say in that portion of the British Isles which at present seems to monopolise your political attention—from witnessing the Requiem Mass and ceremonies at the Church of Santa Maria in Campitelli for the repose of the soul of Cardinal Pentini, who bade adieu to the ecclesiastical vanities of this life at the close of last week.

I happened to be in Rome when he received his cardinal's hat in the spring of 1863, and I well remember paying my respects to his new Eminence when he threw his palace open to the public, and the diamonds of Roman princesses mingled freely with the plainer decorations of all classes of the clergy. I thought, therefore, I could do no less than repay that hospitality by being present at the last honours he will ever receive in this world.

As I did not start from home till a quarter-past nine, and Mass was fixed for ten o'clock, I should have been a little solicitous as to my being in time to get a place worth having, had it been a fine morning. But it was just such another as was the morning of the opening of the Council, *tempo da lupi*, as our Italian handmaiden said to me at breakfast, "wolves' weather," and nothing else. It had been pelting and thundering all night, and the downpour was as constant as ever. I therefore cherished the hope that the ardour of sight-seers would be damped, and I should be able to secure an advantageous position. I was not disappointed. The Swiss Guard were already in the church, but the visitors as yet were few. It was quite plain, however, that there would not be room for many anywhere.

Santa Maria in Campitelli—or, as some people call it, in Portico (owing to a column of transparent alabaster, which belonged to the neighbouring portico of Octavia, having been removed thither from that spot)—is not a large one, even were all its space available; and this morning not a tenth of it was allotted to the public. It is not one of the sacred edifices much frequented by mere explorers, for it contains little or nothing to interest them. In the nave stood the catafalque, and only between its lower end and the main entrance to the church were the public permitted to place themselves. I fancy, therefore, that many must have gone away disappointed of admission, for it was known that the Pope would be present, since, very shortly after my arrival, this narrow space was crammed.

The church was decorated magnificently, every single outline of the architecture being hung and marked out

with black cloth and velvet profusely embroidered with gold lace and fringe. The choir end of the church, corresponding to the apse in a Basilic, was covered in the same fashion, a huge gold-lace cross marking its centre, immediately behind the high altar.

The catafalque was a sloping one, fully six feet high at its lower and nine feet high at its upper end. The pall was in the centre, of gold, and had a broad black velvet border which touched the ground, and on the four corners of which were worked a cardinal's hat in gold thread. The real hat of the deceased was hung against the catafalque at its lower end, in fact just opposite to where I stood. Here, too, was a small altar, on which stood an open book containing the prayers to be recited on the occasion, and the apparatus for the "asperges" or sprinkling the catafalque with holy water. This was performed before the commencement of Mass, and indeed before the arrival of the Pope, by twenty-eight cardinals in succession, who came in twos and twos, threes and threes, and fours and fours, with their trains twisted up like horses' tails and carried by their respective attendants.

There are now fifty-six cardinals in all; and I could not help thinking that half their number constituted a goodly show of respect to the deceased on the part of his venerable brethren of the Sacred College. Amongst them I noticed Cardinal Bonaparte, with the handsome family face and the strange play of muscles about the mouth, which friendly critics would perhaps describe as indicative of kindness and a constant smile, hostile ones as the sign of settled cunning, and the dispassionate as raising at least the suspicion of latent guile. He tries to carry his good-looking head humbly, and by a stoop to atone for the boyish air his youth gives him among so many reverend seniors.

The sprinkling operation lasted some little time; and when it was over—for his Holiness was not punctual—we could only amuse ourselves by watching the sacristans collect the droppings and swealings of the hundred tall candles, stuck in the hundred tall twisted iron tripod candlesticks

which surrounded the catafalque. They collected the yellow wax in handfuls. *Bella roba*—jolly good stuff, as we should say—I heard one of the soldiers of the Guardia Palatina remark to a Neapolitan priest standing next me. “Is it all his?” asked the priest, referring to the sacristan who was collecting it. The answer was in the affirmative; and I could see by my neighbour’s face what a good thing he thought it was to be a sacristan when a cardinal comes to die. Outside these candlesticks, and immediately in front of us the profane crowd, stood the Swiss Guard and the Palatine Guard, and a hard time of it had they to keep the curious multitude in its place.

I noticed that a number of my countrywomen, though arriving very late, were well to the fore. What with pushing, both gentle and violent, cajolling and bullying, pretending to be hurt, and really hurting other people, the weak sex contrives to send the stronger one to the wall on such occasions. “*Che si fanno delle indignità in Chiesa!*” I heard one pious lady—but this time an Italian—say to a sturdy French priest who would not allow her to elbow him out of his place, “are such indignities committed and tolerated in church?” That was her notion of an “indignity”—not to be allowed to do just as she liked in the House of God, reverse the proverb, and give the bones to those who had come early.

I am sorry to say that there is an enormous amount of interested flirtation on all these occasions. The tender way in which young women address the military on duty and worm themselves into the affections of the Swiss Guard and the very best places is something shocking to contemplate. And these terrible-looking fellows have a soft place somewhere under all their armour and yellow and dark blue doublets. Let a damsel only be fair, and have at her command a few phrases of German, and they melt at once, like the wax candles, and are completely at the disposal of these cunning intriguers.

Still I am bound to say we were all pretty comfortable for once, save when the officers on duty thought it necessary to make their presence felt by altering the disposal of the troops. Yet I take it that nowhere are there worse crushes than in Roman churches when the Pope is expected. His

Holiness always draws a crowded house. I think I mentioned that on the 8th it was said an old woman had been killed in St. Peter's. Repeating the report to a lady not quite in her *première jeunesse*, she greeted me with the exclamation, "Worse than that, much worse than that!" I wondered what it could possibly be, and asked if two, three, four—a dozen people had been killed. No, that was not it. A *contadina* had been prematurely confined! So that in her eyes the birth of a baby is evidently "much worse" than the death of an old woman.

There was no fear of either accident this morning, not even when the bells began ringing far overhead, and we knew that "The Sanctity of our Lord," as the Pope is always officially described here, had arrived. Women and ecclesiastics are not punctual, and Pio Nono was certainly half an hour behind his time. He was not long, however, in robing, and he soon entered the church, attended by the twenty-eight cardinals I have mentioned. He alone wore a mitre, and had on a rich crimson cope embroidered with gold. None of the vestments were black, the living colour of the cardinals prevailing, even in the ceremonies after their death, over the usual mourning for the departed. The Pope did not himself officiate at Mass; he only assisted, being ensconced in a high throne with a handsome canopy, again of crimson and gold. Mass was preceded by the *Dies Iræ*, made familiar to most Englishmen by the introduction of its first three lines into the most popular of Scott's poems.

The Papal choir was present, and the effect produced by their admirably trained voices in the singing of this solemn dirge was immensely fine. Owing to the omission of the "Gloria" and the "Credo"—always omitted in requiems for the dead—Mass was soon over, and the spectators at the foot of the catafalque were highly delighted to find that the Pope himself and not the officiating cardinal was about to intone the prayers and perform the ceremonies which are customary at that particular spot. A raised space was suddenly got ready, and on it was mounted a throne or chair of gilt bronze, in the shape of those marble episcopal seats you may see in St. Ambrose at

Milan, and in other old Basilicas, without any back to it, but with arms and uprights. The cardinals remained in their places at the high altar, whilst his Holiness, preceded and accompanied by his *Camerieri Segreti* and a detachment of the Guardia Nobile, came and seated himself within five paces of where I was standing.

It is impossible to exaggerate the hale aspect he wears. Though seventy-eight years of age, his hair is not yet perfectly white, grey predominating in many parts. As there are thousands of people to whom the most trifling matter connected with a reigning Pontiff is of strange interest, I may inform them that his pocket-handkerchief was a blue one, with white spots, exceedingly ugly, and, as ladies would say, not at all *en suite* with his robes or in keeping with the mournful occasion. He used it lustily once or twice; and in this action, as in the sound of his voice in intoning the prayers, showed anything but symptoms of age. He walked round the catafalque twice—once sprinkling it with holy water, once incensing it. Then he returned to his throne, and read the closing passages of supplication for the repose of the departed. His rendering of the *A porta inferi*, "From the gates of Hell," to which the choir responded, "Deliver him, O Lord," was very impressive. Then he prayed aloud that the soul of the faithful servant Francis—the name of the deceased cardinal—and the souls of all the faithful, might rest in peace; and the ceremony was over.

I remember hearing in 1863, when Pentini received the hat, that he was reputed to hold Liberal opinions, and had modified the oath usually taken by members of the Sacred College. Perhaps the report was untrue. At any rate his Liberalism has never since been heard of, and Pius IX. prayed for him this day with all the fervour of a loving father. There was a considerable crowd in the Piazza Campitelli as I emerged from the church, and I waited to see the Pope receive a warm ovation as he drove away. "Evviva Pio Nono!" "Evviva il Papa-Re!" were heard on all sides; one enthusiastic American of gigantic stature waving his hat and crying out, "Hip, hip, hurrah!" a barbarian sound which

was not recognised, and therefore not responded to. Possibly some devout bystander mistook it for a cry of sedition.

It is something, you see, to be a Roman cardinal. The rise of the Sacred College was a gradual affair, but the cardinalitial dignity is now a settled matter, and they rank above all ecclesiastics. It was not till the thirteenth century that they took precedence of bishops, when they obtained the priority they have since retained; its origin being due probably to the dignity conferred on Cardinal Legates. Boniface VIII., at the time that he excommunicated all the Colonnas, issued an interdict threatening with infamy whoever should despoil any of the cardinals; and it was at this period also that the scarlet costume, originally confined to Legates, was extended to the entire Sacred College. The red hat is said to be traceable to a Countess of Flanders, who excused herself to Innocent IV. for not saluting a cardinal on the plea that she did not recognise him for one. Originally the hat was always worn; now it is kept for official displays, and used mostly as a symbol. It was at the Council of Lyons that Innocent conferred the badge, informing the recipients that its colour implied that they should always be ready to shed their blood for the Church. Not much of that now! A red hat implies a share in that oligarchic power which is now being so freely exercised.

THE SECOND PUBLIC SESSION OF THE COUNCIL

ROME, *January 6.*

An American wit, wishing to “top,” as the phrase is, the prudential customs of the British fashionable world, whose dinner-hour, as everybody knows, occurs at a somewhat late period of the evening, declared that his countrymen never dined “till to-morrow.” Roman entertainments of an ecclesiastical nature reverse the fashionable Yankee process, and begin “the day before.” This is the Feast of the Epiphany, but we were made aware of its advent at a very early hour yesterday. To say nothing of the vigorous bell-ringing at noon, vespers in St. Peter’s at three o’clock anticipated the feast, and attracted a goodly crowd. At Sant’ Andrea della

Valle, which during the next ten days will cut a considerable ceremonial figure, of which I shall later have something to say, there was at the same hour a solemn benediction of the water which serves for purposes of baptism during the course of the year, and at the high altar was exposed a life-size representation of the Adoration of the Magi, the gift of Prince Alexander Torlonia, that latest addition to the ranks of the Roman nobility.

Half an hour later the same ceremonial was performed, but according to the Greek rite, at the Church of St. Athanasius, in the Via dal Babuino. At the Propaganda, about the same hour, vespers were sung with great solemnity, whilst at the Minerva, three hours later, matins were followed by the recitation of the genealogy of Christ according to St. Luke, and the chanting of the *Te Deum*. At the Aracoeli and at *San Bartolomea in isola*—that interesting church which stands in the island of the Tiber, on the site of an old Temple of Aesculapius, the Magi were substituted for the Shepherds in the representation of the Stable of Bethlehem. But the real event of the eve of the Epiphany does not take place till after Ave Maria. *Befana* in modern Italian means nothing more or less than a witch; but *La Befana*, an evident corruption from *Epifania*, signifies both that feast itself, the gifts customary on the occasion, and the good fairy that sends them. Add to these the notion, which is also involved, of commemorating the Adoration and presents of the kings who were attracted to the lowly shed where lay the Son of God, and you have a somewhat composite but complete picture of what *La Befana* conveys to the Roman mind.

The habit, largely practised in Germany, of instructing children to hang stockings at the foot of their beds on the eve of the Epiphany to see if some good fairy will fill it with toys and bonbons, is also largely in vogue here. Would that the pious jollification ended there! Anything but that, however. The square of Sant' Eustachio, near the Pantheon, and the approaches that lead to it, are lined with brilliantly lighted booths, containing almost everything that can attract the juvenile eye and the

grown-up palate. The occasion is supposed to be one appropriated to children ; but unless we are to assume that a great many Romans of mature years must be included in that description, one is compelled to conclude that the rights of the young are largely invaded. The streets are crowded with folks who either long since attained the age of reason or who never will attain it, and who appear to think that the greatest fun in life is to buy a penny trumpet and blow it with all the vigour at their disposal in their neighbours' face and ears. One does not object to sacrifice a little of one's sedate comfort for the delectation of the charming juvenile portion of humanity. He would be a churl, indeed, who would silence Tom's drum and little Fanny's squeaking doll, simply that the world might always pursue the tenor of its way more in conformity with the tastes of those who have come to forty years. But Tom and Fanny ought to be in bed by nine or ten o'clock, at any rate, and probably are.

Do not suppose, however, that the din of the Befana then ceases. I live in a lofty and retired part of the city, and it must have been considerably after eleven last night before I retired to rest. But my beauty sleep was broken by the discordant row of toy trumpets, and the shrieks, intended for song, of voices that could scarcely proceed from sober throats. Let it be confessed that Rome is, on the whole (certain filthy habits apart, of the abomination of which Romans appear wholly unconscious), the most respectable city in the world. Propriety, save on the ground I have referred to, is never outraged ; and the tipsy nocturnal choruses which torment and are tolerated in other Italian cities are unknown here, except on the Befana. On other occasions short work would be made of any disturbers of tranquillity and that still even surface which the Eternal City habitually wears. But on the eve of the 6th of January every empty pate in the place may rattle as much as its owner chooses ; and the consequence is that night is made hideous by the worse than childish pranks and more than Bacchanalian cries of a population usually under the severest restraint. Indeed, my night was a succession of broken snatches of sleep.

One does not mind being awake, once in a way, to listen to the plashing of a neighbouring fountain and the sound of rhythmically shuffling feet keeping time to the music of some amorous guitar, and perhaps a trio of harmonised voices. But to be rudely torn from the arms of Morpheus to hear the hiccupping threnodies of half a dozen Philips drunk is not what one comes to the Seven Hills for. Is it that the modern Romans wish, by annual Saturnalia, to prove their descent from the good old stock to whom it seemed good *desipere in loco*? If such be their desire, one feels disposed to say to them, as the great poet of the century said to a race of descent equally illustrious but equally dishonoured—

You have the Pyrrhic dance as yet—
Where is the Pyrrhic phalanx gone?

Such, at least, were my thoughts as the last unmusical howlings died away, and I got to sleep again without any further interruption.

Such a night's rest does not make it an easier matter to be in St. Peter's by half-past eight the following morning; yet that was the hour at which the ceremonies were announced to begin. You know that once much was expected on this day; and, following Papal assurances, and indeed the very regulations drawn up some time ago for the occasion, I said that the Epiphany of 1870 would be big with the fate of Pius IX. of Rome. But my letters of the last week will have prepared you for a ridiculous parturition; and though the occasion has not been without its event, Christians are still in the same position they always were. We have yet no Infallible Pope, and no fresh articles of faith. But I am anticipating a little.

Unlike the opening day of the Council, Christmas day, and New Year's day, this morning broke with a sky and sun worthy of the boasted winter climate of Rome. It was one of those mornings whose magical effects can be seen nowhere but here, when the beauty of Nature is enhanced by the inexplicable beauty of ruins. Again, as I write, the heavens are once more

clouded over, and I should not like to prophesy what sort of a day the Roman Hunt will have to-morrow for its usually well-attended meet at Cecilia Metella. The last week we have been beginning to forget the pluvial divinities who all December ruled our destinies, and as I crossed the Bridge of Sant' Angelo on my way to the Council I thought I had never seen old Father Tiber flowing more pleasantly through a brighter surrounding. Out of the sun there was a pleasant shrewd bite in the air; but in it one almost longed for one of those "*ombrellini*," without which a couple of months hence life will be intolerable.

The ceremonies were in full swing when I entered the Basilica, sparkling like one huge jewel in the flood of sunlight that streamed in through its ugly windows, that worst blot of all upon its architecture. I had not advanced far up the nave before one doubt at least was solved. There was a public session. There sat the Fathers in their white copes and mitres, one-half of whom, some three and fifty, in seven rows, tier above tier, were already well within view. Over their heads, and equally full in view, was the gallery for Princes and their suites; above that again, a tribune for the diplomatic corps; and surmounting all the fresco which represents the perhaps scarcely historic confusion of Arius. There had been no procession, as on the opening day and that of Christmas, the Fathers having taken their places one after another, and the Pope having come in by a private entrance last of all.

This accounted for the absence of any remarkable crowd, and for my being able at once to get close to the Confessional and command the whole scene, ending in the far distance with the Pope on his throne, attended by the cardinals, and over his head the representation of the Day of Pentecost and the Descent of the Holy Ghost. "An Anglican clergyman must feel very small here," said a lady, the wife of one of your noble legislators, herself anything but a Roman Catholic; and though the remark sounded gratuitously unpleasant, there was a touch, if not more than a touch, of truth in it. I suppose it would depend upon who the clergyman

was. Some folks cannot help feeling small when they find themselves in a minority. With others such is the normal condition, and they get actually to pique themselves upon belonging to the army of martyrs. "How did, you feel?" somebody asked Johnson, who was present in the pit when his own beloved tragedy was damned; "Like the monument," answered that "*ultimus Romanorum*," as Carlyle calls the ponderous lexicographer.

I dare say, too, that there are clergymen of the Church of England who, even whilst gazing on such an imposing array of bishops as I yesterday saw around the Pope—bishops to right of him, bishops to left of him—would, nevertheless, feel, by virtue of their office, altogether monumental. Still this mighty show of consecrated heads is for Rome alone, and it would be idle and stupid to attempt to deny its significance or depreciate the influence it has on the beholder. It is history repeating itself, in spite of the apophthegm that it never does so. It reminds one of Pentecost, of the picture of this Council, of the picture of that Council. If one could dream of a Divine dove descending upon the nineteenth century assemblage this looks most like the one to which such a celestial apparition could occur. Nothing so deceitful as appearances, it will be said. No doubt; but at the moment the deception works; and a man must be made of Protestant marble indeed if, whilst standing where I stood to-day, he does not own to a sentiment of wonder, of admiration, and perhaps of annoyance, that Rome still boasts so many subjects and possesses such colossal power.

There is no denying it; that Council-hall is a fine sight, an imposing sight, a moving sight. No place builded of human hands can be quite worthy of a really grand historic scene; but we should cast about us in vain, the whole world round, for a spot so equal to the occasion, and for accessories so fitted to make a framework, as the north transept of St. Peter's, adapted as it is, for the First Council of the Vatican. There have been Popes pious and Popes impious, Popes boyish and Popes venerable, able Popes and Popes utterly incapable, Popes rather

foolish and Popes surprisingly accomplished; but there have been Popes for the better part of eighteen hundred years, and during that period they have had their headquarters off and on—and far more on than off—in this city of Rome. And if any edifice in the world expresses the Papacy it is that massive Basilica which, costing in its design and execution the co-operation of much genius, uncounted gold, and lofty aims, provokes a mingled sentiment in the beholder of admiration and criticism. I can quite understand the thunderstruck attitude, more reverential than discriminating, which sees, both in the Papacy and in “Christ’s mighty shrine above His martyr’s tomb,” a blending of the human and the Divine, in which the latter largely preponderates, so as to give both a permanent spiritual character; whilst even the traveller with more candid eyes is compelled to confess that both St. Peter’s and the Papacy are fearfully and wonderfully made, and never enforced that conclusion more signally than now, when one contains and is exalted by all that is most illustrious in the other.

I suppose that not only the absence of a fine preliminary procession, but also the subject of religious entertainment, which has recently been offered to the vulgar, accounted for the comparatively small and thin body of people that gathered round the Confessional, and gazed through the large open doorway, above which is a half-figure of Christ winging His way from Heaven, with the consoling assurance that He will be with His Church to the end of time. Beyond was the Council-hall, and in the midst of it Mass was being celebrated. My curiosity on the occasion was to see if I had been sending you thoroughly accurate intelligence all these days, despite the scarcely courteous assurances of your Roman Catholic contemporaries that our correspondents send from Rome “a parcel of lies.” I very much doubt if I have sent you one piece of false intelligence since I undertook to gather for you what I could of what is going on within walls supposed to be hermetically sealed; and to-day, at any rate, I received the amplest confirmation of the news I have lately transmitted you. But I anticipate again; and I must ask you to be as patient as I was this

morning when I stood on my legs five mortal hours in order to be able to write this narrative.

At each point of the Mass at which it was possible that some tremendous announcement might be made I found myself growing nervously anxious; and, as is the custom with human nature in such circumstances, fear acted the part of hope, and almost made me disappointed when no interruption came in the solemn celebration, followed by the announcement that Popes are infallible, or that the conclusions of reason are necessarily false. The Gospel was recited, and then the Pope's choir went on to the *Crede*, and I breathed again. One corner at any rate had been turned. The Elevation, since the Pope was present, was done in complete silence, broken by no tinkling bells; and even the thrilling strains of the "*Benedictus*" and "*Agnus Dei*" could not prevent me from again being filled with alarm, knowing that after the Communion, now fast approaching, there might be a tremendous pitfall in store for us. But no! The Benediction was given, and in a moment more Mass was over.

Then began a ceremony the commencement of which rather puzzled me, for I heard the Pope's voice, loud and sonorous; still I could not catch the words that proceeded from him. It was prayer, however, and that was a comfort. It was not a decree, a canon, a letting off of anything startling. I could see that a book was being held up before him; and I knew he was only going through some part of the religious ceremony appointed for the occasion. Presently I was more at home, for the choir broke out into the "*Litany of the Saints.*" I had wanted to get home and send you a line or two by to-day's post, but now I knew the thing to be impossible. The "*Litany of the Saints*" is a tremendously long affair, followed by numerous prayers. And why should it bring matters to a close even when it was finished? It did not, as it happened, as you will shortly hear. It was in itself, however, a striking performance. The choir sang the names of the saints in succession, all the Fathers of the Council answering each time, "*Ora pro Nobis,*" which they did in

capital style. The Litany in question and its chant are both ascribed to the time of Gregory the Great, if not to that illustrious Pontiff himself. The music is Gregorian, and the allegation may be true, though no doubt the names of other saints have slipped in since.

By the time that portion of it was reached at which, in response to every verse of the choir, now addressed direct to the Almighty, the bishops had to sing "*Te rogamus audi nos*," their voices seemed to flag a little. Still they sang well in tune, and the effect was worth going many miles to hear. Once the Pope's voice, thrice repeating the impetration in question, took the place of that of the choir, and this was when he called upon Heaven to bless, inspire, and direct the Council. He was in first-rate voice, and made himself heard far and wide. Then came more prayers, and a pause, and again I was on the alert for the next move. I knew we were not yet out of the wood. Suddenly I heard the Pope's voice again, and this time neither singing nor intoning, but reading, and with great vigour. Was he reading out a decree? Was he uttering another allocution? Not the first certainly, for nothing was put to the vote, and, probably, not the latter, for it was short. He read out of a large book, not from manuscript or any slight printed matter.

What it was precisely I do not yet know; but, in all probability, it was only part of what followed. I saw the wooden pulpit being carried into the Council-hall, and I feared we were in for a sermon. Luckily I was mistaken. The *Veni Creator* was sung, the verses being given by the choir and the Fathers alternately. Then a dignitary in a cope, but without mitre, ascended the pulpit, faced the throne in which the Pope sat, and began reading. It was the Nicene Creed, and at the sound of it a load was lifted off my breast, for it is with that formula that the "Confession of Faith" of Pius IV. commences. I informed you rightly, then, when I said that this would form the *pièce de résistance* of the day, and act as a substitute in this second public session for the decree upon which the Council, as I said, has *not* yet agreed.

I have already described to you its character, objectionable enough to Protestants, but perfectly harmless and inoffensive to Roman Catholics. It is the Confession of Faith which is recited by all "Converts" on their admission into the Roman Catholic Church, and bears principally on the Sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist, throwing in a good word of Purgatory and Indulgences. Drawn up after the Council of Trent, it fairly enough embodies the points on which that Council laid the chief stress. It contains an acknowledgment of the supremacy of the Holy See, such as is familiar to all Roman Catholics. It certainly was a more discreet selection than would have been that of the Article of the Council of Florence, of which I spoke yesterday. You will remember that I mentioned it only as a well-authenticated *on dit* in quarters likely to be properly informed; but I threw doubts on the probability of its being recited. Perhaps it was abandoned through a prudent timidity; perhaps it was never entertained. The Confession of Faith of Pius IV. could raise no opposition.

It was recited by, I believe, Monsignor Fessler, the Secretary to the Council; but as he faced the Pope, and had his back to me, and was, moreover, a very long way off, I cannot speak positively on this point. It is an immaterial one, however. He recited the Confession slowly and loudly, the recitation lasting nearly a quarter of an hour. Then came the very dreariest ceremony at which it was ever my lot to be present. Every single Patriarch, Primate, Archbishop, Bishop, Mitred Abbot, General of a Religious Order, in turn, left his seat, and carrying his mitre in his hand approached the Throne where the Pope sat in a mitre of cloth of gold, and laying his hand on the Gospels, and making obeisance to the Holy Father, solemnly expressed his adhesion to the Confession of Faith just recited. How long do you think this dumb show lasted? Two hours, all but five minutes! I really believe Pio Nono would sit on a throne till the crack of doom, neither tired nor hungry, as long as there came people to kneel before him whose kneeling was worth having.

I can entertain little doubt that the whole ceremony

was got up for the sake of this act of joint and separate veneration on the part of the Episcopacy. There could not be a pretence anywhere that there was a single bishop whose faith was shaky on any of the points the Confession contains; and as this act of obedience to the Pope was performed on the day of the opening, and the self-same prayers were recited which accompanied it, it looked uncommonly like that scarcely praiseworthy or fortunate operation of Moses when he struck the rock twice because the water seemed to him to come neither quickly nor plentifully enough. Perhaps the Pope wanted to punish the Council for not getting on more quickly with its work. Every time that there is a public session, in which there is nothing to proclaim, perhaps we shall have this two hours' kneeling and scraping, and the Fathers will be brought, by dint of repeated obeisances, into the proper episcopal frame of mind. But of the weariness of it! I almost joined in the "Te Deum" which ensued, so thankful was I that the barren session was over. It was nearly three before I reached home.

ROME, *January 7.*

I think I have spoken handsomely enough of St. Peter's in my foregoing letter; therefore I may say with less scruple that, regarded as a church, it strikes me as partaking more of pomp than piety. Having spent a very long morning in its atmosphere, I felt disposed to spend a very short evening at another, or outside another, sacred edifice, of which it may be said that it displays more piety than pomp. I would speak of Aracoeli, to some of whose doings I recently solicited the attention of your readers, but where yesterday, about a quarter to five, there took place a ceremony which I had not happened to see before, though it is an annual one. When I reached the bottom of the steps of which I spoke on the same occasion—the 124 steps taken from the marble of the Temple of Quirinus—and which conduct straight up to the church from the south-west, a dense crowd already choked all the ways, filled the lower piazza, thronged the other and shorter ascent to the Campidoglio, and dotted likewise the

ancient steps themselves. "Dotted," I say; for it would have been impossible to cover them, since they were already partly occupied by stalls containing little dolls—"Gesu Bambino" being the principal ones—rosaries, and various other furniture of the spiritual world.

Up these steps, as I told you, the very devout sometimes travel on their knees, but I did not add that they do this chiefly when they want to find anything they have lost. This retriever quality these steps share with Saint Anthony; but as on the walls of Rome you may constantly read of handsome rewards for the recovery of lost property, either the Romans are waxing incredulous, or St. Anthony and the steps of Aracoeli are not doing their duty by well-worn knees. Yesterday no such journey was possible; there was no room for that. Besides the stalls I have spoken of, many of the steps were covered with the literature of the period—true books of dreams, sure instructions how to win in the lottery, reasons in favour of and against marrying, model love letters, and a description of the effects of love, jealousy, distance, and parting. But the one that struck me the most, for it was the most out of date, was the *Motu Proprio* of Pius IX. when he conferred Liberal institutions and nominated a ministry. It was dated 1847, but it seemed a contemporary of the behemoth.

"Who wants to pass the time pleasantly?" calls out one fellow, by way of recommending his dried pumpkin-seeds. "*Ecco il vero ritratto di Gesu Bambino!*" ("Here is the real portrait of the Infant Jesus.") It was a wonder to see, and, I suppose, moves to devotion. But why were all these thousands congregated on the spot, you will ask? You shall hear. Music is coming, and now a handsome banner. I ascend the steps still higher. I see some priests in their robes, and recognise among them the head of the Franciscan Convent of Aracoeli. They bring him a chair, and all the folks, far and wide, drop on their knees, whilst the bells of the Capitol clang lustily. He has something in his hand. It is the Gesu Bambino of Aracoeli, whose origin and venerated character I described in a recent letter. There are thousands of peasants and the poor, hundreds of the

middle class, many priests, some bishops. The big Franciscan is on the chair right at the top of the 124 steps, and he holds the Bambino high in the air.

• It is a tawdry little doll, much bejewelled, with a hole in the back for the priest to put his finger through, so as all the better to present it to public view. I had never seen it in the light of day, and I cannot say what an effect the garish rays of the setting sun had on that paint and tinsel. But he blest all the crowd with it—slowly, slowly raising it, then lowering it, then moving it to the right, then to the left. Then he descended from the chair, and it was over; and the people scrambled up from their knees. That was what they had come to see. “*Hai visto quanto è bello?*” (“Hast thou seen how beautiful He is?”) asked one child of another. But were they not *all* children? Strange! very strange! Rome teaches a broad distinction between worshipping images and praying in their presence; but in this particular instance I am driven to say the distinction is without a difference.

THE EMPRESS OF AUSTRIA AND THE ROMAN HUNT

ROME, *January 14.*

I am going to-day to imitate the example of Apollo, at least in that particular which is expressed in the Horatian words “*neque semper arcum tendit.*” This morning I shall say nothing about Popes, Bulls, Councils, Allocutions, rival parties, Monsignori, and the rest of it. To-day we will a-hunting go, or at any rate describe how we went a-hunting yesterday. Everybody who has spent a winter in the Eternal City, and even many who have not, are aware that the sport which Mr. Freeman, deeming it to be peculiarly English, has attacked so vigorously in the *Fortnightly*, and which Mr. Anthony Trollope, perhaps unconsciously governed by the same reason, has defended so stoutly in *St. Paul's*, is practised with a certain amount of amateur ardour by the descendants of the warlike gentlemen who contrived in times of turmoil to found a Roman nobility. “The meet of the fox,” as I find it advertised here, has been carried on under some difficulty, for when on one occasion a young patrician came

his final cropper, and thus made an unannealed exit from this sinful life, our Holy Father the Pope forbade any more racing and chasing, and excommunicated hounds, horn, and huntsman in a far more effectual manner than happens to those who come within the far-stretching four corners of the Bull *Latae Sententiae*.

But I suppose Saint Hubert, the patron of the chase, contrived to melt the Pontiff's heart, and the sound of what some folks think the sweetest music in the world once more woke the echoes of the tombs and ruins of the Campagna. Many of the Romans have had capital horses brought out from England, and are as well mounted as anybody might wish to see. The huntsman and the whipper-in are imported from the same country, and eke the hounds; but for the rest, the institution deserves its name of the Roman Hunt. None but a Roman can be on the committee, and though voluntary contributions are not despised from such visitors as choose to join it for the season, the hunt is entirely in native hands. I might perhaps say that it would be no worse if a few experienced Britons were admitted into partnership; but I must not be ungracious or criticise severely the gift of pleasant-enough sport.

There is a meet sometimes twice, sometimes three times a week, weather permitting. It is necessary this year to add that most English proviso, for you know how little we have had so far of skies Italian. Meet after meet has been put off, and I believe they have killed but once this winter. Do not suppose that this arises from a dearth of foxes; they abound. But what abound more are chances of escape. The Campagna is regularly undermined, and Reynard is thoroughly well acquainted with his extensive if ruinous patrimony. As for "stopping," it is out of the question; it would require an army. I might adduce other reasons for the conclusion which I am going to draw; but I said I would not be ungracious, and therefore I content myself with remarking that though to the mere rider hunting in the Campagna is the prettiest and most agreeable thing in the world, to the keen sportsman it must be a disappointment. Nowhere is the former better off.

The meet is usually within easy distance of Rome; each

time he will have a fresh gate to pass out of, and a fresh road to trot over, in order to reach it; and when once fairly started in the field, he will have a variety of ample excuses for refusing to risk breaking his collar-bone. As a rule, the country is an easy one; and should it become difficult discretion will not be dishonourable. But the meets are not attended by smooth riders only; carriages drive out in dozens, in most instances bearing those who only go to see the hounds throw off, and then return to the city. Spillman carries his tent to the ground; and either before or after the day's work—for, like Goldsmith's hare, we generally contrive to pant back to the place from which at first we drew—the inner man may be refreshed. The favourite meet of all is at the tomb of Cecilia Metella, on the Appian Way, partly because it is within easy hail, partly because the locality is eminently picturesque. Twice this year the meet has been fixed for this spot, but the holder of the farm known as "Roma Vecchia" objected, and it had to be postponed till a later period of the season. On Wednesday, however, everybody was surprised to find it named for the very next day. The explanation was soon forthcoming. The Empress of Austria had graciously expressed her desire to see something of the sport in the Campagna, and the following day would honour it with her presence.

That evening there was not a saddle-horse in Rome to be had; they had all been picked up for the following day, and scores of people cursed their ill-luck at not having heard the important news before. Indeed, the number of stray steeds to be got were but few at first, for you hire your horse by the month, paying the reasonable sum of from two hundred and fifty to three hundred francs for it. Mindful of the classical advice of Lord Shelburne, who, when his nephew, in a state of grievous pecuniary embarrassment, thought seriously of parting with his favourite mare, remarked, "*acquam memento rebus in arduis servare*," I have endeavoured to support the arduous fatigues of a correspondent anent an Oecumenical Council by a steady allowance of horse exercise; and I had nothing to do but to send word that my steed should be at the Porto San Sebastiano—or 'Bastiano, as the Roman groom

calls it—by half-past ten. The meet is never before eleven ; and if you bear in mind the effect of an Italian sun even long before that hour, you will be able of yourself to add one of the reasons I have abstained from mentioning why the day so often ends without a crush.

There are various ways of getting to them. Some people start from their doors ; but these are the incautious or the economical, for the slippery stone pavements of Rome make the intramural journey dangerous—unless, indeed, they happen to live close to some gate, in which case they can mount at home and ride round the walls till they come to the road they have to take to get into the ground. Most of the visitors, who of course ride hired horses, mount at the particular gate which is nearest to the point they are making for. Many of the Romans drive the whole way, and thus start with a fresh horse. Yesterday our gate was, as I say, that of San Sebastiano ; and when I started from the Piazzo di Spagna, it would have utterly perplexed the late Admiral Fitzroy to say whether it would rain or it would not. There had been a thick fog, which was all in favour of the pleasanter supposition ; but for all that it looked more as if we were doomed to be drenched, if not wholly to be disappointed.

In England it is by no means uncommon for men, particularly for Londoners, to go to hounds in a railway carriage. Still even that seems scarcely so strange as driving to it through the Forum, across the Sacred Way, and under the Hill of Triumph. By the time I had reached the Baths of Caracalla I found myself in a queue of carriages ; and, as an unhappy horse was down ahead, and the road is but narrow, I had time to contemplate whether the Porta Capana really was at the spot assigned by most antiquarians, or in the adjoining Vigna preferred by Mr. Parker and the Archaeological Society of which I wrote a few words the other day. The delay was considerable, and being close to the mountain and valley of Egeria, I could not help thinking of the agreeable nocturnal interviews vouchsafed by the sweetest of nymphs to the most pious of kings, hit off in a line, though not a satirical one, by Juvenal, and embalmed in a couple of stanzas of *Childe*

Harold. Is the spot fabulous? Perhaps; but what of the historical temple, close to it, raised to Honour and Virtue? Let us hope that was no fable.

Now we moved on again, and just as the Arch of Drusus and the Gate came in view, down poured the rain. The poor horses were catching it in the open space beyond, and I recognised my own beast among them. Nothing, however, was to be gained by mounting in this fierce shower; and far away in the Campagna the aspect of things seemed growing worse and worse. Still carriages passed—I sat still in mine—most of them open ones; and though the heads were being put up, folks showed no intention of turning tail. What will not men and women dare to see an Empress? Horsemen, too, passed on, getting wet to the skin, but dauntless nevertheless. At length the rain ceased, and I was in the saddle and away.

What a string of carriages as far as the eye could see! All Rome had turned out. It is paved road near the gate, but there are unpaved bits at the side, and we horsemen managed to find room to canter past the carriages, whose pace must have been provokingly slow. A little way on, the Via Ardeatina branches off to the left, but not a soul took it. Everybody was for Cecilia Metella. It is at this point stands the Church of *Domine quo radis*. Such is the question which St. Peter is said to have put to his Lord and Master, who appeared to him at this very spot when the Apostle was flying from Roman persecution. “Lord, whither art Thou going?” “I am coming to Rome again to be crucified,” was the reply. Peter understood the rebuke, and returned, and a copy of the impression of the Saviour’s foot, the original of which has been transferred to St. Sebastian, is shown here to this day. But we are ascending the hill, and the round tomb of two thousand years old, erected to the wife of Crassus, is in sight. The carriages are all made to halt. I wonder why, and push on. A Roman Prince on horseback is stopping them. I ask if I too must wait. I need not, and ride past. There is a lane a little farther on, and probably the Empress will debouch on to the Via Appia at that point, and the road is being kept clear.

It becomes evident now that the meet is not at Cecilia Metella itself, but farther ahead. Trotting through a good half-mile of tombs I come to it. Had I not left so many vehicles behind I should have thought all the carriages in Rome were already here. The place looked like an English racecourse. Another English feature was that the clouds again looked as black as night, and, in another moment, they emptied themselves upon us. Men on horseback cut back to the road and tried to get shelter in and to windward of the tombs. More lucky, I galloped into a cowshed; but as I did so, up came a landau, and the Empress drove into the enclosure. By the time I was again on the ground, she had entered the tent specially prepared for her, not far from Spillman's Buffet, and, together with the King of Naples and the Count and Countess Trani, was being entertained at a *déjeuner* prepared by the Roman Hunt. The tent was covered with evergreens, gaily dappled with camelias, roses, and other flowers of the season. Orange trees had been brought out from Rome, and were ranged circularly in front of it. In the middle of them was a fountain.

The latter seemed quite a superfluous provision, for the heavens themselves were so bountiful. Now they vented themselves in fierce hail; and though a beautiful horse—the gift, I believe, of the Empress to the Queen of Naples, who, of course, could not be present—stood caparisoned for an Imperial burden, it was feared that the Empress would not face such an ungracious welkin. But she did, and though it then looked like a day of determined storm, from the moment she handled her bridle it cleared up. In half an hour it was bright sunshine, and in an hour there was not a cloud to be seen. Such courage deserved a reward. She is so like her sisters that I should easily have mistaken her for one of them. She has the same colouring of hair and complexion, and the same look of high-bred amiability. She sate her horse gracefully and well, and behind her came a numerous cavalcade, consisting of the principal members of the Roman Hunt. The sport was well devised. Her Majesty and those who remained with her were on a high table-

ground, the rim of which was in the shape of a scimitar. Round this they rode leisurely, whilst down below the huntsman, the dogs, and the remaining horsemen, working their way through stunted scrub, made for them as pretty a sight of its sort as was perhaps ever seen.

As yet only Monte Cavo and Frascati were in sunshine, all the remaining landscape being wrapped in heavy clouds of black, dun, and white. But by the time the hounds had worked their way round so as almost to meet the cavalcade, now forced to descend from the extreme end of the scimitar-shaped ridge, the sun had conquered, and we may think nothing more of the weather, save to suppose it for the rest of the day worthy of the scene and the occasion. Montaigne speaks of the Campagna as ugly and wearisome, and a Frenchman of later date calls it "that infernal Campagna!" But nature has better interpreters than those who "abhor its beauties," and I think yesterday's success depended entirely upon the intense loveliness of the scene and the ultimate favour of the heavens. Nothing could have been gayer or more brilliant. There was a very large field, consisting of between one hundred and fifty and two hundred horsemen, counting fair riders, of whom we never have any lack.

But when I turn from beauty to business, I have a shorter story to tell. There was a short run after a hare, which got away, and three or four short runs after the scent of foxes never seen. The better-mounted and more ambitious of the company took a few walls for the edification of the rest, who waited till horses' heels had almost levelled these broad low structures, put together without mortar, and of stones of every size. *Stagionate* are things which still fewer care to face, though a young gentleman crossed one of them by the aid of his horse, though the horse neither followed nor accompanied him. They are higher than a five-barred gate, and what is still more important, they are made of much tougher material. They are ox-fences of fresh wood, knocked together with tenpenny nails. Of course all obstacles were broken down for our Imperial visitor, who followed bravely to the last. As, however, the

hounds did not throw off till nearly half-past twelve, and we were back at the tent and the carriages by half-past three, it was not a hard day. The Empress expressed herself much delighted with the, in this case, very gentle sport, and if the countenance be any test, she enjoyed herself thoroughly. Everybody else did the same, for when the fox is not the principal object of a hunt the presence of so exalted and amiable a lady may well be regarded as the main attraction of the day. She leaves Rome on Monday.

ROME, *January 17.*

At the close of a former letter, I alluded to a sermon preached at St. Andrea della Valle, at eleven o'clock in the morning, by Dr. Manning, and I engaged to give your readers a brief and compendious account of its substance. Sermons, even when delivered by the most distinguished ecclesiastics, always gain something from the importance of the spot and the gravity of the occasion which witness their delivery; and the fact that the discourse of the Archbishop of Westminster would bring to a close a series of morning sermons, delivered every day since the Epiphany by dignitaries of high standing, gave an additional zest to the feelings with which all his pulpit utterances are regarded by English circles. I am not one of those who can plead to being in any sense the victim of his attractions; and I hope I shall not seem cynical if I attribute his "drawing" powers to his having once been an Anglican archdeacon, and now being a Roman Catholic archbishop; to the singular passion of the English race for theological controversy; to Dr. Manning's confident dogmatism, earnest and mortified appearance, and widespread notoriety. Whether the explanation I offer be the sound one, or there ought to be substituted for it one more flattering, certain it is that Dr. Manning possesses a spell potent enough to make the most ardent Protestants forgo Divine service even on a Sunday morning in their own church outside the Porta del Popolo.

It was more than half an hour before the appointed time that I reached the church, and it was already half full. Many, no doubt, had been attracted by the

celebration of High Mass according to the Ambrosian rite, which was then still going on, and, indeed, did not terminate till a quarter-past eleven; but it was impossible to scan the majority of faces around one, and not perceive to what nationality they belonged. Moreover, far from concerning themselves about the high altar, they tenaciously occupied the chairs and benches placed in front of the main pulpit, half-way down the nave. Those who did not arrive till after me had to stand; and by the time the celebrants had disappeared from the altar there was scarcely anywhere so much as standing room. The bell was rung, and a well-known face, pale, emaciated, and furrowed, emerged from the sacristy. In another moment the preacher stood before us, aloft. He turned towards the sanctuary and prayed in silence. Then he recited the *Ave Maria* aloud for us all to join in, saying it in Latin, and with the broadest Roman accent. No half-measures for this man. You see it in his narrow but earnest head; you hear it in his weak but sharp-edged voice. "The Throne of the Son of David is as the sun before me." That was his text; and it had not left his lips before I knew that we were in for a panegyric of the self-evident enthroned infallibility of the Church, and an exposure of the blindness of those who do not see it.

I had perhaps better clear the way by saying that he avoided any direct reference to Papal Infallibility; but, by dint of dexterously introduced quotations and glancing allusions, he contrived to make his audience perceive, beyond the possibility of doubt, that he drew no distinction between the infallibility of the Church and that of its head. Anybody who has once heard this preacher knows his style. The language is well and classically chosen; the manner would be execrably bad but for its evident earnestness, and there is no art or preparation in the words, and little or no premeditation in the arrangement of the sentences. The art and premeditation are all in the thoughts and the order in which they are presented. These betray deep design and shrewd prevision. Yet you would think the man despised his audience, were it not apparent that what ought to convince no rational human being, had already

convinced the speaker. I never hear him without being reminded of Mr. Gladstone. He has the same ardently uncandid mind. The imperfect processes which bring persuasion to his brain seem to him so perfect that he is obviously lost in amazement at their not carrying the whole world with them. In, I doubt not, supreme good faith he presses arguments whose shallowness is often ludicrously transparent.

He is the most audacious and the worst controversialist I ever listened to. Having dealt for a considerable time, and with great plentitude and felicity of diction, on what he termed the sunlike self-evidence which attends the infallibility of the Roman Church, he divided those who challenge it into persons who will not see it, and persons who cannot see it. The existence of such extraordinary creatures as the latter he called a mystery, from any attempt to explain which he would abstain. As to the rest of us, who will not see this infallibility, he was more explicit. We are proud, self-willed, inflamed by animosity, the passion of controversy, and the rest of it; so that the sun in the heavens is denied by us. I confess I sat thinking that the man was painting his own portrait; and when he came to the animosity born of controversial fury, I fairly smiled—it sounded so applicable to the accuser. He then proceeded to argue, with considerable plausibility, if with but a rather lame display of historical lore, that never had this sun in the heavens, this infallibility, been so apparent as at the present moment, when more than seven hundred—were accuracy his *forte*, he would have said less than seven hundred—bishops were assembled in Oecumenical Council to testify to it.

I had hoped for a learned exposition of previous Councils, as he commenced by drawing a rough parallel between them and that of the Vatican, but he hurried over the ground in a slovenly way, carefully avoiding details, and by his lamentable confession, that he did not know whether the Oriental Churches were represented at Trent, bearing witness to the general belief that his ignorance on such subjects is profound and crass, and apparently substantiating the imputation that the historical

portion of his last two pastoral letters, such as it is, was got up for him by a Jesuit controversialist who, though a pundit compared with the archbishop himself, is either most imperfectly informed or astoundingly disingenuous. Having reached the Council of Trent he could not avoid touching on the Reformation and its results; but he did so in a very gingerly manner. The Church, he said, had been during many centuries attacked all along the line, and had repulsed the assault at every point—on all matters regarding the Godhead, the divinity of Christ, the procession of the Holy Ghost, the sacraments, purgatory, and the invocation of saints. No one can contradict the assertion, for now many a hundred years Rome has certainly stuck to all her doctrines, pleasant and unpleasant. But when the preacher asked what had become of the nations that at the Reformation broke away from Rome, he forbore from answering his own question, avoiding, with characteristic want of candour, a point damning to his general argument.

I take it that dissent from Rome is just as apparent as agreement with it is. There are two suns—indeed there are a good many suns—in the religious firmament, if we will only be candid; and that is the trouble to a good many folks. Instead of grappling with this difficulty, Dr. Manning stepped aside from it and preferred to expose—surely an easy enough task at this time of day—the differences of religious opinion in the ranks of Protestantism. When, however, he proceeded to inform his audience that Calvinism is dead, I wondered at his daring. As an American lady, a convert to Roman Catholicism, said to me afterwards, “He evidently has not been in the United States; there is plenty of Calvinism there.” And there is plenty nearer home, quite as evident as any sun or any infallibility. Is Dr. Manning among those who will not see it? I prefer to put it down to constitutional infirmity, to theological colour-blindness, which can see nothing but scarlet. Dwelling upon the spectacle presented by the present Council—doubtless a most imposing one—so numerous and so various in its composition, he laid great stress upon its perfect unity. After being good enough to glance at such

persons as your humble servant, and to describe them as "hangers about the doors of the Council, and inventors of what they will," he thus continued: "Believe me, who am in it, that there never was a Council at which there was greater unanimity, greater unity, greater and more perfect brotherly love." Had he prefaced this assertion with the statement that there never yet was a Council in which there was unanimity, unity, or perfect brotherly love, it might be difficult to contradict him. But introduced as it was, it was intended to convey the impression that those phenomena were now all to be witnessed to perfection in St. Peter's.

As Dr. Manning has been good enough to characterise my labours, and those of others similarly engaged, with such frankness, I have the less scruple in saying that from the pulpit of Sant' Andrea della Valle he yesterday told some seven or eight hundred people an audacious falsehood, and what, since as he says he is in the Council, and knows what is going on in it, he is well aware to be a falsehood. He knows better than I do that there is no unanimity, that there is the most flagrant and passionate difference of opinion, and that the Fathers have not yet been able to agree on one single point. Knowing, as he does, as I told you yesterday, that the Fathers have been rebuked for telling outside the Council what has taken place within it, with what face can he accuse anybody of hanging about it, and inventing what they will? I am sorry that an English gentleman should have become so subdued to what he works in as to stain his character by bringing accusations he knows to be unfounded, and making affirmations he knows to be false. Here is the passion of controversy with a vengeance. I had only just before heard the news I transmitted to you yesterday at such length. Judge, then, of the effect this bold assertion of unanimity must have produced on me, and I think I may be excused if I said what the Psalmist once said in the bitterness of his heart.

The sermon was concluded with a panegyric on Ireland and France, and an appeal to all present to contribute to the Society of the Propagation of the Faith at Lyons, by whose assistance he declared he had been enabled to

build many churches, chapels, and schools in England. In fact, England was a large recipient of the bounty of this society. "Wonderful sermon," I heard one Dundreary-looking youth say to another Dundreary-looking youth, as we all went away. "Wasn't it? Almost convert a fellow." I heard more discriminating criticism in the evening, even from Roman Catholics, and I, perforce, reach the conclusion that, though sermons may perhaps promote controversy, they certainly fail to assist faith. Nevertheless the pulpit drum ecclesiastic was being thumped yesterday from morning to night by a succession of theological fists. When I walked to the General Post Office at five o'clock hundreds were pouring out of San Luigi de Francesci hard by, where Monseigneur Mermillod had been holding forth. I spoke of him on a former occasion, by hearsay, as an eloquent preacher. Sounder critics now assure me he is popular and turgid. Yet I shall try to hear him.

I was too late also for a sermon at Sant' Andrea della Valle, from a Neapolitan prelate, of whom I have heard great things. He was just making his final appeal to the crucifix as I arrived, and in a moment after he had gone. But the altar and the large stable of Bethlehem, with all its figures behind, were ablaze with light; soft strains broke forth from the organ; the church was full of genuine worshippers, very different from the curious controversial colony of the morning; so I stayed for Benediction. It brought the octave and all its ceremonials to a close, and thus I saw this prolonged Christmas out. How they pray, these people! Their faults are legion; but let us confess their virtues; they are the humblest, most uncomplaining, devoutest creatures on God's earth. Their simple piety is a far more powerful argument than the sermons of many archbishops. But again, as I said, it is only one sun; there are several others; and honest argument alone will never land a man in any religion. Probably the Roman Catholic Church was well aware of the fact when she bethought herself to aid the dialectical faculties with incense, music, and countless candles.

To-day is the feast of St. Anthony, who is patron over

many things. To begin with—if you lose anything, from a key to a jewel, pray to St. Anthony to find it for you, or to help you find it. In the next place, you ought to pray to him to be preserved from fire. Not that, at the same time, you are not to insure yourself; among modern improvements insurance companies have found their way into Rome, and have many clients. But I suspect that this protection of St. Anthony against incendiaries or domestic carelessness has been illegitimately deduced from his real duty, which is to cure what is called St. Anthony's fire, or—am I not right in saying so?—erysipelas. The old French name of the disease was known as the *mal des ardents*. St. Anthony can rid you of that—how comes it that the Pope has it in his leg?—and that is why this hermit of the Thebaïd is represented with fire in his hands or under his feet. So you will be told here, at any rate, though perhaps the real explanation is the other way. But I have not exhausted the good saint's qualifications. Every day this week horses, donkeys, mules, oxen, in a word, all animals of domestic use, will be taken to the square in front of the church of Sant' Antonio de Monti, near Santa Maria Maggiore, to be blessed by the chaplain, and get one of St. Anthony's medals.

If this ceremony produced an amelioration in the condition of dumb animals in Rome I should admire and hail it. Nowhere are animals more in need of some species of exorcism, for nowhere are they more diabolically vicious. But why? Because they are treated with unsurpassable brutality. Often ill-fed, always mercilessly whacked and driven, they move my heart to pity and indignation. Any piece of ill-luck to the driver is vented by him on his beast. Let a poor animal fall—and I wonder how they ever keep on their legs in these streets—and I have seen the infuriated attendant stand on its head and stamp. I have seen a horse lashed till he kicked over the shafts, and then driven on in sheer rage. *Non sono Cristiani* (they are not Christians). Then why, in the name of Heaven, bless them? There is a miserable, a painful contradiction in all this. I fear the introduction of a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals would do more than all these medals

and all these benedictions by appointed chaplains. The poet Cowper, who declared that he would not number among his friends the man who heedlessly would step upon a worm, would be able to make few here among the lower classes. There is hardly a saddle-horse to be seen that will pass a cart or carriage quietly, and no wonder, for it is habitual with drivers to flick a led horse from mere gay cruelty of heart. I am afraid to say how many horribly bruised and blind horses I have seen in the City of the Apostles. That in most instances the eye has gone from dreadful beatings about the head I cannot doubt. I wish St. Anthony really would see to it, for apparently no one else will.

There was another meet of the Hunt this morning out beyond Monte Mario, in a glorious country, consisting of long rolls of splendid turf, interspersed with corkwoods, and to the far left the shimmering sea. I rode to it, but only to ride back again, for that alone was a matter of fourteen miles, and had I followed my own and my horse's mood this letter would never have been written. The luxury of galloping over such a country as I had a taste of this morning is beyond all description when sun and dispersible cloud divide the sky, and a soft air is blowing which comes from no quarter of the compass and bears no earthly name.

I am sorry to have to record the death of a victim to the love of sport. An American gentleman of the name of Kuhn, anxious to distinguish himself from the rest of his countrymen by being able to ride, and to take a genuine part—as far as that is possible—in Roman hunting, brought over from England some first-class horses, and practised himself in leaping in some grounds attached to a villa just on the outskirts of the city. On Tuesday last, he had taken a horse successfully over three or four stiffish fences, when, in trying another, he lost his nerve, tugged at his horse just as the latter was rising, and brought its shoulder against a post. It rolled over on to him, falling on his stomach. Mortification set in, and the day before yesterday the poor fellow died. He was a quiet man, popular among

all who knew him; and melancholy to relate, he leaves a widow plunged in inconsolable sorrow. It is well the fatal accident did not befall him in the field. I was out yesterday for three hours with Captain Young's beagles, a much more unpretending pack than that of the Roman Hunt, but more like business. We saw a couple of foxes, and had a short break; but the day was bitterly cold, and the scent would not lie. The two foxes came in view together. One ran to earth and detained the dogs, whilst the other got clear away. I pray we may have no more fresh casualties in the Campagna, or the Pope will once more stop hunting altogether.

One of our latest arrivals in Rome is Mr. Arthur Russell, one of your legislators, and brother of our universally popular unofficial representative at the Vatican. He will have to leave us again at the end of a week to make his appearance in Parliament. He left Earl Russell at San Remo, inhabiting a house in one of the rooms of which there are—and were before his lordship took it—four portraits—Cavour, Garibaldi, Mazzini, and its present occupant. The reports of his lordship's health are good, but he still hesitates to come on to Rome, though he has half promised to do so. When Lord Amberley was presented to the Pope, a short time ago, his Holiness expressed a great desire to see his old foe, and the son promised for the father that the latter would certainly not visit the Eternal City without presenting himself at the Vatican. Lord Russell naturally shrinks from the journey at this uncertain period of the year. Still, he may come.

FUNERAL OF THE EX-GRAND DUKE OF TUSCANY

Rome, February 1.

I have made a brief allusion to the decease of the ex-Grand Duke of Tuscany, who died on Saturday last. I have now to record the last honour paid to his remains. It was known at an early hour yesterday that they would be conveyed in the evening to the church where, on the ensuing

morning, would be sung a solemn Requiem Mass for the repose of his soul ; but what the church was to be seemed an open question. Some said, and with a good show of reason, that it was to be San Giovanni dei Fiorentini, which was built by the Florentines towards the close of the sixteenth century, after the design of Giacomo della Porta, and which contains several sepulchral memorials to natives of Tuscany. I have learnt, however, to be cautious in accepting any Roman report, no matter by how many people supported and credited ; so I wended my way to the Palace in the Via delle tre Cannelle, inhabited of late by the family of the deceased Sovereign. My road to it, towards the close, lay through the square of the Santi Apostoli and past the church of that name ; and no sooner had I reached it than it became evident that it was the spot destined for the appointed ceremonies. To make assurance doubly sure, I walked on to the Palace, and there, besides receiving a confirmation of my suspicions, was informed that the funeral *cortège* would start at six o'clock, and making a long and artificial round by the Corso, the Via dei Condotti, the Piazza di Spagna, the Via de' due Macelli, etc., so come back almost to the spot from which it had started.

As there was sure to be a great display of troops, I felt satisfied that six o'clock "sharp" would not be the real hour, and it was half-past six before I descended the steps of the Trinità, and went down the sparsely crowded Condotti to see if there were as yet any signs of the *cortège* coming up the Corso. Not a sign, not a sound. As you will understand, dinners had to be ordered earlier than usual, and dispatched with unceremonious haste, for people to be in the streets at the hour I name ; so, *en attendant*, I comforted myself with a cup of coffee and a cigar in the famous Caffé Greco. Still no sound nor sight of a procession, though the Condotti now was pretty full, and that part of the Piazza di Spagna which was available for the purpose of seeing was filling. Between the top of the Via dei Condotti and the foot of the Trinità steps is a fountain which might have served for Mr. Tennyson's image of prayer—rising, like a fountain, night and day—

for its waters are always plashing, plashing. I had it immediately at my back, having secured the vantage ground of a single stone step which is in front of it on that side. Thus I looked straight down the Via dei Condotti. After I had been standing there a short time I turned and perceived that the steps of the Trinità were black with people, all anxious to witness the passing of the *cortège*.

It was now a quarter-past seven, and we began to hear the approaching sound of bugles blown mournfully. It was a fine starlit night, but moonless—dark enough for the full effect of the flaring torches which now drew near. They heralded a detachment of dragoons, and then, to my surprise, came the coffin. It was placed inside a state carriage, hung with black, and surmounted by a cross, but the carriage has as much glass as a gala equipage, so that the whole world could see into it. At the four corners of the coffin sat four priests in black gown and white surplice. The thing looked unimposing—looked ugly indeed; but I suppose etiquette was duly preserved, and taste must sometimes defer to precedent, especially when a monarch, even when a discrowned one, dies. The carriage of the Austrian Ambassador came next, and then those belonging to the King of Naples. There were torches, borne in front of General Kanzler, General Zoppi, and General Bossi. The native Chasseurs followed, and afterwards, I think, the *cacciatori esteri*, mostly Swiss, who won such encomiums from the French at Mentana. And always, understand, was there the accompaniment of torches, and those slow melancholy bugles. Twice the sad monotony of these was broken by a regimental band, playing a dead march. Half an hour had gone since the first Dragoon came in view, and the *cortège* had not as yet come to a close. Indeed, it was little more than half over. All the Zouaves had yet to come, and the Gendarmes, both mounted and on foot. It was past eight before I descended from the step on which I had been standing, and private carriages were then bringing up the rear. Monks are more telling than soldiers in a funeral procession, especially at night, when the lurid torches lend their effective aid. Still the spectacle was an impressive one. I should think that fully two-thirds of the

garrison of Rome took part in it, and how considerable that is you know.

I did not attempt to follow them to Santi Apostoli, where the remains of the Grand Duke would lie during the night, duly watched and prayed by. I postponed that duty till this morning. It was impossible in the course of the evening to ascertain with certainty at what hour to-day's Requiem Mass would be. All that seemed to be known positively was that the Pope would be there. Late at night, however, I was so confidently assured that the ceremony would commence at nine that I was on my way to the Santi Apostoli before half-past eight. I had been wrongly informed. Ten was the true hour. Still you can never be too early for a ceremony in which the Pope is to play a part, so eager are both the pious and the polite world to be present. Arriving at the hour I did, I had ample time and opportunity to examine the catafalque, which stood in the centre of the nave. Those who were good enough to read the account I gave a few weeks ago of the catafalque and its adjuncts prepared in the Church of Santa Maria in Campitelli on the occasion of the Requiem for Cardinal Pentini, must understand that the arrangements of this morning, in those particulars, were precisely similar. Only one slight alteration had to be made. At the four corners of the handsome pall, the cardinal's hat, worked in gold thread, was covered by a pasteboard representation of the Grand-Ducal Arms. For the rest, the hangings of the Church and the disposition of the tall candles were such as I then described them.

After making this inspection I got a chair, chose my ground—which I kept to the last, through many surrounding vicissitudes (for people will get into wrong places and have to be turned out of them)—and resigned myself to waiting and the process which Mr. Carlyle has aptly described as labelling one's thoughts. Amusement of a less intellectual character, however, was provided for us. On either hand of the catafalque, though of course some little way back from it, were two tribunes; that on the right, for the diplomatic corps, that on the left for officers of high

rank. Over the former was another tribune again, but a smaller one; this was reserved for persons of princely blood. The arrival of so many distinguished people no doubt made the minutes go somewhat faster, and long before ten these tribunes were all occupied. On the right hand of the King of Naples stood a female figure in the deepest mourning, and with a heavy veil over her face, which was never lifted. I presume this was the Countess Trapani, the daughter of the Grand Duke. I need not enumerate the other members of exiled princely houses who were present, their names are so familiar to you. It was half-past ten before the Pope arrived, his approach being made known to us by the noise of voices outside, raised perhaps—despite the occasion—to cheer him.

The Mass, not said by the Pope himself, was the usual Requiem Mass, always welcome, when it must needs be sung, for its splendid *Dies Irae*. At its termination the Pope came from the altar and, just as in the case of Cardinal Pentini, recited the funeral prayers over the catafalque, incensed it, and sprinkled it with holy water. I thought he looked rather pale. I dare say he was moved by the occasion. I wonder if he knows how much he had to do with ruining the worldly fortunes of poor Leopoldo and those of his family. Pope and Kaiser between them brought an end to a rule which, had it been left to itself, could scarcely have been overthrown on the plea that it was a bad or an unpopular one. Absolute toleration and complete personal liberty were what the old Government of Tuscany was for ever striving to concede. But Vienna and Rome were everlastingly complaining, alleging that Tuscany was a neighbouring house on fire.

Heaven knows, it was quiet enough, but freedom to read and say what you like was in Papal and Austrian language equivalent to a conflagration, and the Grand Duke was often compelled to do things he loathed. Leaning on these two bad friends, he suffered far more than either. Personally, he was popular to the last. He was one of the simplest-mannered men that ever lived. His summers he used always to spend, in the old days, at

that delightful spot the Baths of Lucca, mixing freely with its visitors both in the Piazza and at the balls of the Casino. The *Bagni* have never recovered the blow inflicted by 'Poldo's deposition. • When I visited them a little while back they were still beautiful, but they were deserted. I have not yet learnt for certain where he is to be buried. I have heard it said that he is to be taken to Florence; but I doubt if any one here would condescend to make the necessary application. A spontaneous offer from Victor Emmanuel would come with grace, and seems to me no more than is due from that quarter. It was a long business getting out of the church, and another long business getting out of the square, but half-past twelve saw the last carriage drive away.

ROME, February 23.

There formerly attended the coronation of the Pope a striking ceremony which it is much to be regretted has of late been abandoned. The moment the new Pontiff awoke on the morning after his election, he found in his chamber a body of people, one of whom carried in his hand a bronze cock. Its significance was unmistakable. It was to remind the successor of Peter that he, like Peter, might deny his Lord. I cannot tell you at this moment the last occasion on which this excellent practice was observed; but I can say that it has been set aside only in recent times, and that it did not reign among the more flattering functions which attended the elevation of Cardinal Mastai-Ferretti to the Papal chair. Pius IX., even on the very first day of his pontifical authority, would have quickly sent such a deputation packing. We must regard the desuetude into which a capital old custom has been made to fall as one more link in that long chain of conspiracy with which the supporters of Papal absolutism have for a considerable period been striving to fasten slavish submission on mankind. Everything that helps to establish the fallibility, the peccability, the wickedness of Popes has been studiously thrown into the background, and, where possible, withdrawn for ever from the eyes of mankind.

It is impossible to doubt that Rome would falsify,

conceal, or burn every book that ever was written, which contained a practical objection to the cherished dogma of Papal Infallibility. I have no hesitation in affirming that not one Roman Catholic in a hundred thousand knows anything whatever about the history of the Sovereigns who for so many hundreds of years have ruled over their Church. They are proudly told that the Papacy is the longest-lived dynasty in the civilised world. Why, then, are they not told some particulars respecting it? It is a fact that the history of the Popes is not taught in any Roman Catholic school or college in Europe, and though Roman Catholic youths grow up with a due knowledge of the main incidents in the lives of the monarchs of the special country to which they happen to belong, their teachers sedulously keep back from them any knowledge of the lives of the monarchs of that country which they are never tired of telling them is their country in a much truer and larger sense than the mere spot of earth where it occurs to them to be born. Why is this?

Can anybody be acquainted with the history of the Papacy, and be at a loss for an answer? Roman Catholics are not taught the history of the Papacy — nay, are dexterously prevented from learning it — for the simple reason that it would shock, scandalise, and perplex them. It is a history, in many parts, not fit to be read by any one who wishes to retain a belief in the divine mission of Rome. There have been Pontiffs of shining sanctity, Pontiffs of honourable ambition, Pontiffs of decently blameless lives, Pontiffs sufficiently good to pass muster. It may safely be asserted that the majority have been no worse than their neighbours, and that many have reached the highest summits of piety. Let all this be allowed, for it is true. But if this were the whole story, does any one suppose that the chief text-book in Roman Catholic schools and colleges would not be a History of the Papacy? Not only is it not a chief text-book; it is not in use at all. The Popes who have been a disgrace, not only to the Chair of Peter, but to common humanity, have been so numerous that the ingenuous youth would of a certainty be far more horrified and shaken in his

faith by the wickedness of the one than edified and confirmed in his faith by the virtues of the other. And so it comes about, that whilst Roman Catholics have heard in a vague sort of way that Alexander VI. was not a model of piety, and Leo X. was, perhaps, somewhat of a worldling, they quietly presume that this is about all that can be said against the long line of Pontiffs, and that even this is much exaggerated. I am painting no imaginary picture. I am describing with perfect accuracy the state of their minds. I wonder if Pius IX., who is not a pundit, is acquainted with the lives of the numerous sinners who have preceded him in the Pontificate. I suppose not. If he is not, his ignorance faithfully reflects that of his huge flock.

Yet, would that he and all Roman Catholics could, at this critical moment, have before them a truthful record of the lives of those who, not content with styling themselves the successors of the fisherman, and the representatives on earth of Christ himself, aspire to be pronounced free from all liability to error. It is utterly impossible to read of the scandalous steps which have in many instances led men to the Papal throne, and the atrocious crimes and vices with which they have stained it, and still entertain the belief that God has chosen such people as the depositaries of the most divine of all his attributes. I have no wish—I have never had any wish—to excite odium against the Roman Catholic Church; nor would any amount of provocation drive me into doing so. But it is well, at a moment when the Infallibility of every Pope that ever sat, or ever will sit in St. Peter's Chair, is yet under debate, just to recall the circumstances which attended the elevation and reign of some of these Vicars of Christ. I write nothing new. I write what is known, and has long been known to every scholar, but what unfortunately is known but to few Roman Catholic prelates, and to hardly any Roman Catholic laymen.

What do your readers say to the infallibility of a young gentleman whose career I will briefly narrate, John XII.? The grandson of the infamous Marozia, he was just eighteen years of age when he ascended the Papal throne. His profligacy was so gross and flagrant

that the Romans sent a deputation to the Emperor Otho, begging that he would either remove or bring to a sense of decency the licentious youth who inspired the city, never an intolerant one, with horror and dread. Otho pleaded the excuse that John was yet a boy, and that time might mitigate his iniquities. Meanwhile the truth of the charges was ordered to be tested by wager of battle. John refused the ordeal, but confessed his guilt and promised amendment. This was done by the infamous young scapegoat of a Pope only to gain time, and to allow King Adalbert to come to his assistance. The subterfuge did not save him. The Emperor set out for Rome at the head of an army which was regarded as a divine embassy sent to chastise the unworthy Vicar of Christ. Encouraged by its approach, the cardinals and all the chief clergy assembled, and accused the Pope of homicide, sacrilege, incest, and perjury. He had debauched his sisters, they said, and drunk wine to Venus and the Devil. His conduct had been unworthy even of the lowest comedians. All this was said in a Council where it was declared that the very Indians had heard of John's revolting crimes. When he celebrated mass, he did so without communicating. He bestowed one bishopric on a boy ten years old; and he selected a stable for the consecration of another. His cruelties practised on certain ecclesiastics cannot even be named. When the emissaries of the Emperor sought for this tiaraed losel he was out shooting.

When at length they found him, and reported to him the Imperial threats, his only reply was that he would excommunicate all his opponents in the name of the Omnipotent God, and then all their powers would be at an end, that of celebrating mass included. This impure boy was to turn off the flow of pure water and grace! The Council, finding him contumacious, deposed him, and elected in his stead Leo VIII. War ensued, and John got the upper hand. He scourged and mutilated his episcopal foes; one of the cardinals had his hand cut off. In 964 he suddenly died, many at the time believing that he had been stabbed by an injured husband during the very act of outrage, whilst the vulgar long credited the story that the Archfiend himself had been his

murderer. "Contaminated by every conceivable atrocity," is the epitaph written of him by a Roman Catholic ecclesiastic. Conceive this incestuous and perjured assassin being infallible.

• Men ought to be ashamed of themselves to attempt to fasten so preposterous and revolting a belief on the consciences of their flocks. He had not been dead seventy years when he found a worthy successor in Benedict IX., who, according to a contemporary historian, was of the mature age of nine when his father Alberic, Count of Tusculum, bought him the Tiara and the Chair of Peter. Some historians have striven to show that he must have been eighteen years of age when he became Vicar of Christ; and though both Gregorovius and Cantù accept the former statement, it is possible that his age is a little under-estimated in it. Of his crimes, when he did attain the age of puberty, there is no dispute. A bystander has left it on record that a narrative of this boy's turpitudes is impossible; it would be too horrible. At last he declared that he would marry; and in any but a Pope his courtiers might have hailed the news with rapture. The Romans, in furious disgust, expelled him from the Eternal City, but Conrad II. brought him back. After another five years, he was again driven out, and another Pope elected; but again he returned, backed by violence on the part of his relations. Wearied at length of his position, he sold it to a Roman priest called Gratian, and devoted himself to spending the proceeds in riotous and infamous living. Finally, he thought he should like to resume the Papal attributes, and, although there were already two competitors, Damasus II. and Sylvester III., the latter of whom had been elected in his stead, he proceeded to make good his claims.

• There were thus three Popes—one at the Lateran, one at the Vatican, one at Santa Maria Maggiore; and "all alike," writes Otho of Friesingen, "were abandoned to a disgraceful and corrupt life." Damasus was poisoned, thus reducing the competitors to two. After fifteen years of criminal enjoyment of the Tiara, Benedict IX. really abdicated, and is said to have ended his days penitently in a monastery at Grottaferrata. But think of fifteen years of Popedom under this unhallowed scapegrace, and

then ask if Popes can be infallible. It is idle to answer that infallibility and impeccability are different things. I know they are, but Heaven would have lost all claim on our respect and obedience if it could have handed over the infallible management of our souls and bodies to such wretches as these sons of hell. I need scarcely recall the agreeable incidents of the reign of Alexander VI.; but who can ever forget the description, again by a contemporary, of the four beggars carrying his corpse into St. Peter's, of the prayer-book not being found, of the clerks and the soldiers of the palace quarrelling about the torches, and of the free fight which ensued, during which the remains of the Papal monster were left unheeded.

No amount of virtue, piety, self-denial, purity, wisdom, conscientiousness, on the part of several Popes can cover the turpitude of these their brethren. To imagine such creatures infallible by divine choice and inspiration is to the man of sense absurd, and to the man of religious sentiments blasphemous. That Rome does not see it does not surprise me. If practical demonstration could convince her she would have long ago arrived at the conclusion that her mission was anything but celestial. But Rome and Romans are never shocked. It is only Roman Catholics from other parts of Christendom who are liable to be scandalised. I will give you a small instance, for it occurred only this morning. I was in the Sacristy of St. Peter's, inspecting some priceless works of art which are stowed away there with a total want of appreciation of their merits, when my attention and that of my companions, a Roman Catholic lady and gentleman, were called to three young acolytes—mere children, who were handling and, more or less, playing with the sacred vessels of the altar, chalices, patines, etc. Now it is an absolute law of the Church that none but persons in holy orders shall touch these vessels with the naked hand. Yet here were these irreverential young urchins handling them with the most careless familiarity. My companions were much shocked, and said nothing of the kind could happen in Ireland—their own country. It certainly could not happen in England. But everything

happens in Rome. The place is 'one huge Sacristy, from which all reverence has departed. And yet, forsooth, this unpious—not to say impious—Rome is to govern and dominate with absolute power the really pious Catholic world. I can well understand the Pope clinging to the empire marked out by the Pagan line—

Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento,

but for my life I cannot understand Christendom enduring the thralldom.

The rain has spoilt nearly everything this year, and *Giovedì Grasso* has not been spared. It rained yesterday in torrents, and the lower populace, to whom yesterday was the great day of the Carnival, were completely baulked of their pleasure. I drove along the Corso this morning, and I never saw anything like its condition. It is a flagged street, so that usually when it rains the wet runs off, and mud there is none. But during Carnival time it is covered with a thick layer of *pozzolana* (reddish earth found in the Campagna, of which here they make mortar), so that the horses that run at the end of the day may have some foothold, and not slip on the stony pavement. Mix with this *pozzolana* cartloads of white, blue, and red confetti, which are shovelled out of troughs in the various balconies on to the pedestrian actors in the Carnival. Then let it rain steadily for twenty-four hours, during twelve of which carriages use it as a high-road. I suppose you will be able to conceive what must then be the condition of the Corso. Its filth is horrible. As if the place was not dirty enough already. When will this nasty week of dirt-throwing be abolished? Let the flowers remain, the presents remain, the *Moccoli* remain; but it is high time that grown-up people should give up pelting each other with dirt.

Perhaps when cleanliness invades Rome, it may then strike Romans that the aforesaid is a very beastly amusement. But is cleanliness ever likely to enter it? There are no signs of it now. We have had rain enough this winter to cleanse an Augean stable; but Rome is as unclean as ever.

I know a man who, when he first came to Rome perfectly ignorant of the language, sallied out to make a call, and looked up at the corner of his street to see its name, so that he might write it on his card. He saw in large letters "*Immondezzaio*," and he wrote that down and gave it as his address. He really was not wrong. It is anybody's address in Rome. In the more fashionable streets they now profess not to allow persons to chuck their refuse out of the window; but it is done all the same. In the more retired quarters "*Immondezzaio*" is still invitingly written up. "What do people mean," said a French lady, "by saying that Rome is not a free city? Why, you may hang your clothes out to dry at your drawing-room window and nobody will prevent you." You may read on the wall of the Lateran Basilica, *Pena a chi lorda le vicinanze della Chiesa* (those who foul the precincts of the church will be punished); but the inscription has almost been obliterated by repeated defiance of the threat. *Magnificam hanc spectator quam miraris scalam* are the first words of a long inscription on the first landing of the famous Trinità steps. They were very magnificent once; but now all the spectator sees are artists' models throwing about the husks of their midday meal, and in conspicuous recesses—well, what you see nowhere but in Rome.

14th March.

We are now well into March and nothing is yet settled. The position, therefore, seems to be this. The Council has been asked to affirm Papal Infallibility, and its decision may now be arrived at any day. The interference of France may prevent its coming on at all, and practically close the Council. The majority in the Council may vote the dogma; and in violation of all precedent, the vote of the minority may be disregarded, and the dogma be proclaimed. The minority, thus outraged in violation of all precedent, may quit the Council and head a schism. If they do, they will not be without a following. The letter of M. de Montalembert, though the utterance of a dying man, expresses the sentiments of many living Roman Catholic laymen of high distinction; and it will interest many people to know

that Dr. Newman has written to his bishop at Rome, Dr. Ullathorne, stigmatising the promoters of Papal Infallibility as an insolent, aggressive faction, praying that God may avert this threatened peril from the Church, and affirming his conviction that if He does not see fit to do so, it is because He has chosen to delay the Church's ultimate triumph for centuries. Every fresh incident makes it more obvious that learning, piety, and charity are all arrayed against the dogma; and if it is carried it can only be because an old man, intoxicated with self-gloriousness, and dizzy with the incense of adulators, has, by a conspiracy of twenty-four years' duration, drawn into his hands the threads of absolute spiritual power.

To the Editor of the "Standard."

• DR. NEWMAN AND THE COUNCIL

SIR—I am led to send you these few lines in consequence of the introduction of my name, in yesterday's *Standard*, into your report of the "Progress of the Oecumenical Council." I thank you for the courteous terms in which you have on various occasions, as on the present, spoken of me; but I am bound to disavow what you have yesterday imputed to me, viz. that I have "written to my bishop at Rome, Dr. Ullathorne, stigmatising the promoters of Papal Infallibility as an insolent, aggressive faction."

That I deeply deplore the policy, the spirit, the measures of various persons, lay and ecclesiastical, who are urging the definition of that theological opinion, I have neither intention nor wish to deny; just the contrary. But, on the other hand, I have a firm belief, and have had all along, that a Greater Power than that of any man or set of men will overrule the deliberations of the Council to the determination of Catholic and Apostolic truth, and that what its Fathers eventually proclaim with one voice will be the *Word of God*.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

JOHN H. NEWMAN.

THE ORATORY, *March 15.*

To the Editor of the "Standard."

SIR—In answer to the letter of "The Writer of the Progress of the Council," I am obliged to say that he is right and I am wrong as to my using the words "insolent and aggressive faction" in a letter which I wrote to Bishop Ullathorne. I write to make my apologies to him for contradicting him.

I kept the rough copy of this private letter of mine to the bishop, and on reading the writer's original statement I referred to it and did not find there the words in question.

This morning a friend has written to tell me that there are copies of the letter in London, and that the words certainly are in it. On this I have looked at my copy a second time, and I must confess that I have found them.

I can only account for my not seeing them the first time by my very strong impression that I had not used them in my letter, confidential as it was, and from the circumstance that the rough copy is badly written and interlined.

I learn this morning from Rome that Dr. Ullathorne was no party to its circulation.

I will only add that when I spoke of a "faction" I neither meant that great body of bishops who are said to be in favour of the definition of the doctrine nor any ecclesiastical order or society external to the Council. As to the Jesuits, I wish distinctly to state that I have all along separated them in my mind, as a body, from the movement which I so much deplore. What I meant by a faction, as the letter itself shows, was a collection of persons drawn together from various ranks and conditions in the Church.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

JOHN H. NEWMAN.

March 22.

To the Correspondent of the "Standard."

THE ORATORY, March 22, 1870.

DEAR SIR—I thank you for the courtesy which has led you to write to me with your name.

As I ought not to be ashamed of owning anything which I have written, I do not feel myself personally injured by

the circulation, in whole or in part, of one of the most confidential letters which I ever wrote in my life, without my knowledge.

But I have no wish at all to have the responsibility which attaches to those, whoever they may be, who have deliberately withdrawn it from the careful custody of the person to whom alone I felt it lawful, to whom I felt it a sacred duty, to address it.—I am, Dear Sir, yours faithfully,

JOHN H. NEWMAN.

A. AUSTIN, Esq.

The foregoing facts and the authentic letter I have just quoted from so influential an authority as John Henry Newman are in themselves sufficient to prove that an excuse would have been discovered, within the conclave, for adjourning the Council. But an interruption occurred, from without, in the results of the Franco-German War; and it is to the last degree improbable that any one will ever hear of its resumption.

We left for England at the end of February 1870, and never again saw the Rome of Winckelmann, Vasi, and Piranesi. When we returned, some years later, we found those worse than Goths and Vandals—the modern Italians—in full career, destroying old Rome, and—worse still—constructing that architectural nightmare, “Nuova Roma,” at which, I grieve to think, they are still busy.

END OF VOL. I

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